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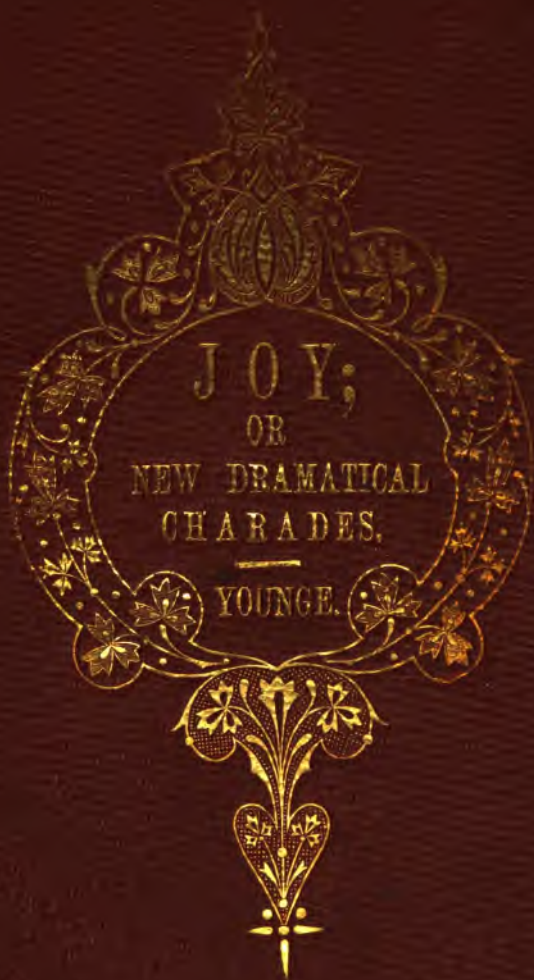
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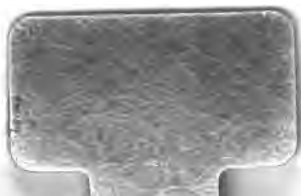
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1st Charade—Act I.

"The Trial of Skill."

P. 8.

JOY;

OR,

NEW DRAMATICAL CHARADES

FOR

HOME PERFORMANCE.

BY

ANNEMINA DE YOUNGE.

LONDON:

JAMES BLACKWOOD, PATERNOSTER ROW,

1860

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268. ~~268~~. C. 349.



TO
MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

THIS LITTLE BOOK

IS

Affectionately Inscribed.

P R E F A C E.

THESE Charades were originally written to enliven the winter evenings of a residence in the country. So much amusement was derived from learning and rehearsing the parts, and preparing the dresses, and the representation being very successful, the authoress was induced to think of sending forth her various characters to seek their fortunes in the world, hoping they might cause similar amusement in other families of charade-loving boys and girls.

The authoress is aware that her scenes are longer than those generally acted for Charades—this was by the special desire of her company—“make it nice and long” being the often reiterated request; nevertheless, it is supposed that the “Words” are sufficiently prominent, as those which have been performed were guessed at the original representation.

The scraps of songs introduced are upon well-known airs, and will be found to have a good effect—some retain the

original words, and others are slightly altered to suit the purpose of the scene.

As so much depends upon costume, it was thought that a few hints might be acceptable. These may easily be varied or improved upon by the taste and ingenuity of the performers.

In conclusion, it is hoped that this little book will please those for whom it is intended, and help to pass pleasantly away a few hours of Merry Christmas time.

ANSWERS TO CHARADES.

CHARADE THE FIRST *Mis(s)-for-tune.*

CHARADE THE SECOND *For-give.*

CHARADE THE THIRD *Ring-let.*

CHARADE THE FOURTH *Com(e)-fort.*

CHARADE THE FIFTH *Plain-tiff.*

CHARADE THE SIXTH *Off-ice.*

CHARADE THE SEVENTH *Mess-age.*

CHARADE THE FIRST.
IN THREE SYLLABLES, AND FOUR ACTS.

ACT THE FIRST.

FIRST SYLLABLE.

CHARACTERS.

LADY IMOGENE } *daughters of a Baron.*
LADY ROSABEL }
SIR ALONZO, surnamed THE
BRAVE *in love with Imogene.*
COUNT LONGBOW *his rival.*

COSTUME.

THE two Ladies might be dressed in the old style; dresses opening down the front to display a stomacher and under-skirt—elbow-sleeves, rich lace, jewels, and a light, graceful-looking mantle would also be appropriate for the garden scene. For the Count, cavalier style—short cloak, hat and feathers, ruffles &c., as gay as possible, and Alonzo must look as much like a gallant knight as he can. Both should have a moustache, either put on or corked. Very good feathers may be cut in paper and curled with the scissors. The colours worn by the different performers should contrast as much as possible.

OVERTURE.—“*When the Swallows Homeward Go.*”

CHARADE.

SCENE.—*Supposed to be in the garden of an ancient castle ; rustic chairs or a rout seat in the recess of the window, or conservatory. Target at one end of the room. Enter LADIES IMOGENE and ROSABEL. IMOGENE, with her handkerchief to her face, appears in a state of distress.*

Ros. My dear sister, do not despair, you know I have great influence with papa, I will go directly and try to persuade him out of this whim,—depend upon it I shall soon return with good tidings. *[Kisses her, and exit.*

Enter SIR ALONZO.

Alon. Imogene ! my fairest !—Rosabel told me I should find you here,—but tears ! why, how is this ?

Imo. Alonzo ! we must part !

Alon. Part ! Oh never ! Tell me, what obstacle can have arisen to stop the course of our true love ?

Imo. You know Count Longbow ?

Alon. I have seen him,—a frippery fellow, all feathers and finery—who talks very big, and looks very small,—what of him ?

Imo. Nothing less than this. The Baron, my dear, but now very unkind papa, is, as you know, laid up with the gout, and this Count Longbow has been very much with him, amusing him with all sorts of marvellous tales about his own exploits in foreign countries (of which Rosabel and I do not believe one half), and having unhappily taken a great fancy to me, he has demanded my hand of papa, who declares that I shall marry no one but this same Count, and I am not to see you any more ! *[The handkerchief again in requisition.*

CHARADE.

Alon. I will go directly to the Baron, and expostulate with him,—how dare that fellow think of you !

[Is about to rush off, but is restrained by IMOGENE.]

Imo. Alonzo, stay,—pray do not go now—the gout has made papa so very irritable. Rosabel is with him, trying what she can do—but I am afraid it will be of no use, I entreated and implored, declared I would never marry any one but you.

Alon. And what did he reply ?

Imo. (*Sings*).

AIR.—“ *Villikins and his Dinah.*”

“ Go, go, boldest daughter,” my father replied ;
“ If you don’t consent to be Count Longbow’s bride,
I’ll leave all my fortune away from my kin,
And you shan’t reap the benefit of one single pin.”

Alon. And not one single pin do we care for the fortune. I have enough for both. We’ll still be faithful—still be true.

Imo. I feel ’tis hard to say Adieu—but I cannot disobey papa.

Alon. I know what I will do—find out this Count Longbow—quarrel with him—fight him—and put an end to him.

Imo. Oh Alonzo ! pray do not talk so horribly—you might be killed yourself.

Alon. No fear—I am more than a match for him.

Enter LONGBOW, *advancing to* IMOGENE.

Count. Light of my eyes ! charming creature ! fairest Imogene ! *[Sings.*

CHARADE.

AIR.—“*Lucy Long.*”

I've just now asked your pap-a,
He says that you must wed,
And that to me, Count Longbow,
You shall be mar-ri-ed.

Imo. (Sings.)

Indeed sir, I'll not marry,
I think I am too young,
So please, sir, you must tarry,
For a long time, yes, very long.

Alon. (to COUNT.) Approach that lady at your peril, sir
Count—draw and defend yourself. [*Draws his own sword.*

Imo. (Rushing between them.) Alonzo, for my sake forbear.

Count. (To ALON.) Sir, I do not fight in the presence of
ladies, you shall hear from me at a more fitting time.

[*Exit, bowing gracefully to IMOGENE.*

Alon. (Sheathing his sword.) I don't believe the fellow
can fight.

Imo. Oh ! Here comes Rosabel.

Enter ROSABEL.

Ros. Well, I think you will say I have used my persuasive
powers with success. Let us sit down, and I will tell you all
about it.

[*IMOGENE and ROSABEL sit. ALONZO stands beside them.*

Alon. Thanks, dear Rosabel, a thousand times.

Ros. Thanks ! Nonsense, do not think I could bear to see

my sister Imogene married to that ridiculous Count? besides, what would—you know who—say when he comes back, if he found that she was not to have his dear friend Alonzo? I should have him fighting Count Longbow on your behalf.

Alon. Well then, tell us what you have done in order to avert such a catastrophe.

Ros. I need not repeat all the arguments I used, but this is the result. You know papa is very fond of archery, we trace our pedigree from one of our ancestors who was knighted after the battle of Cressy for his skill in using the crossbow. Well, Count Longbow boasts that he can hit any mark, at any distance, either standing, kneeling, running, or, Parthian like, retreating, three times successively. Now papa has consented that he shall be made to prove his skill here on the terrace, the mark to be a left-hand glove belonging to Imogene (*Exhibits a glove she has in her hand*), which he is to shoot in the third finger, three times successively; if he does that, papa declares that she shall marry him to-morrow, but if he should miss once out of the three, he is to wait one year,—if twice, two years,—and if he does not hit the mark at all, he is to consider himself dismissed, (*To IMOGENE*) and papa will then consent to your marriage with Alonzo.

Imo. Oh suppose he should succeed!

Alon. I do not fear the result. I am sure he is only a boaster. (*To Ros.*) When is the trial to take place?

Ros. Now, directly, and the prize being a lady's favour, our wonderful archer is to take his position on one knee; the Baron will be witness from the window of his room. Ah! there he is. (*Looks upwards and waves her hand.*) He is

CHARADE.

quite ready, and here comes the Count, prepared with his bow and arrows.

[Enter COUNT LONGBOW. *Bows profoundly to the ladies, but takes no notice of ALONZO.*

Ros. Alonzo, fasten this glove to the centre of the target, and then measure the ground.

[ALONZO obeys, indicates to the Count, the spot where he is to take his position, and then retires to the side of the ladies.

Ros. Before you begin, Count Longbow, I will repeat to you the conditions, of which the Baron my papa, has already informed you. The mark is yonder glove, which if your arrows pierce in the third finger, three times successively, the hand that glove belongs to, will be the prize you win—if you miss once, the Baron decrees that you shall wait one year, if twice, two years, and if you should miss it every time, you are to resign all pretensions to the hand of my sister the Lady Imogene. You will take your position on one knee.

Count (*bows*). I quite understand. (*Addresses IMOGENE.*) And, fairest lady, if I should fail, I pray you to believe that only my great anxiety to win the prize could cause my hand to tremble and my aim to be unsteady.

Alon. (*Aside.*) Ha! he knows he cannot do it.

[The COUNT then proceeds to lay his scented, lace cambric handkerchief on the ground, drops gracefully upon one knee, and aims the first arrow—it misses the

CHARADE.

glove entirely—then ROSABEL, IMOGENE, and ALONZO exchange delighted looks, and sing mockingly—

AIR.—“*Singing Lesson.*”

Bravo, bravo, well done indeed,
We thought if you tried you would not succeed.

[*The COUNT frowns and stamps his feet,—aims the second arrow with no more success than the first. ROSABEL, IMOGENE, and ALONZO, again Sing:—“Bravo, &c.,” and the third shot being likewise unsuccessful, they exultingly sing:—*

The trial is over, you have done indeed,
Count Longbow, we find that you cannot succeed.

Count (in a rage). I have been treated most unfairly,
but this at least I will have.

[*Quickly advances to seize the glove, but is intercepted by ALONZO, who takes possession of it.*

Count (to ALONZO, significantly). We shall meet again !

[*Exit.*

Alon. Yes, in new characters, I hope.

[*Turns to IMOGENE, and sings:—*

AIR.—“*My Pretty Jane.*”

My Imogene, my Imogene,
Your tears I now can dry ;
And smiles your face adorning
Will again enchant mine eye.

CHARADE.

Then name the day, the wedding day,
And I will buy the ring,
The lads and maids in favours white
And the village bells, the village bells shall ring.

[Merry peal of bells heard, from the piano.]

Ros. Hark ! the bells are ringing now, and papa beckons.
(*Looking upwards to an imaginary window.*) Come, let us
go into the Castle.

[Exeunt Omnes.]

END OF ACT THE FIRST.

ACT THE SECOND.

SECOND SYLLABLE.

CHARACTERS.

MRS. NEEDLE *milliner, who lets apartments.*
MISS JULIA SMITH *first-floor lodger.*
MISS ARABELLA SMITH *second-floor lodger.*
POSTMAN
BARNABY *errand-boy to Mrs. Needle.*



6th Charade—Act I.

"The Chair of Truth."

P. 10

CHARADE.

OVERTURE.—“*I love my love in the morning.*”

SCENE.—*Interior of a milliner's shop, represented by various bonnets and caps upon stands.*

Enter MRS. NEEDLE.

Mrs. N. (Arranges the bonnets.) I think both my lodgers must be expecting some Valentines this morning, they are stationed at the windows, evidently watching for the postman, with their doors wide open, ready to rush down when he comes in. He is very late. (*Looks out of the window.*) I don't see him any where—can he have passed? I wonder whether either of them will have a Valentine. (*Takes up a bonnet, surveys it admiringly, and whilst speaking puts it carefully in a band-box.*) Well, though I say it, that shouldn't, this is a remarkably sweet bonnet. “Take it for all in all, I ne'er have looked upon its like before.” It must raise my reputation; any one can see it has been formed by the hand of taste. I do hope Miss Wiggins's face will become it,—it will be a thousand pities if she does not shew it off to advantage. That boy of mine has not come back yet, of course, just because I want him. (*Goes to the window.*) Why, there he is! playing at marbles, as usual, whenever he can get an opportunity.

[*Goes to the door, and calls* BARNABY

Enter BARNABY.

Mrs. N. You tiresome boy, why didn't you say you had come back? You know I told you I had plenty for you to do to-day.

Bar. Please, mum, you said as how I mustn't be more than half an hour gone, and I run all the way, so I wasn't no more than a quarter of a half, and I thought I might have the other quarter to myself for a little reckerryation.

Mrs. N. Recreation, indeed! What next, I wonder? You know very well it is more than an hour since I sent you to Rosemary Villa. Take this band-box and carry it carefully to No. 37; say it is for Miss Wiggins.

Bar. (*Taking the box*). Yes, mum, I'll carry it very carefully, just as how I always does.

Mrs. N. Now mind, you are not to run with it and knock it about.

Bar. All right mum, only I must run back, 'cos as how "I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls" last night, and didn't it just give me a chill. I aint got warm yet. [*Exit.*

Mrs. N. That boy has had too much education; he'll either rise in the world, or go down in it, or be nothing better than an errand boy all his life, as sure as my name is Mrs. Matilda Muslin Needle. Recreation, indeed! that comes of teaching the lower class to read and write, for as that sensible old lady, Mrs. Darning Needle very rightly observes, it fills their heads up with ideas that would not otherwise have got into them. Oh! gracious! there's that cap for Mrs. Jones. (*Sits down hastily and takes up an unfinished cap.*) Must be done by twelve o'clock—that is, it must if it can, and I don't see how it can, so it can't. (*Puts the cap down again, and goes to the window.*) How is it possible for one's fingers to be working, when one's eyes are required to look for the postman, and one's thoughts are all about letters, and those kind of things. Oh, here he comes at last! And singing, posi-

CHARADE.

tively! as if it was of no consequence to him whether people were in a hurry or not. [A voice heard, singing.

AIR.—“*We won't go home till morning.*”

I shan't get home this morning,
I shan't get home this morning,
I shan't get home this morning,
It plainly doth appear.

Enter POSTMAN, with a bag, and a large packet of letters.

Post. I am an hour behind time already, and not half done. (*Reads.*) “Miss Smith, at Mrs. Needle's, 24, Paradise Row.”

Mrs. N. Give it to me—make haste, there's a good postman.

Post. Stop a bit, Mrs. Needle. Does Miss Smith lodge here?

Mrs. N. Oh yes! I've *two* Miss Smiths, one in the first-floor, and one in the second,—and very nice apartments they are for single ladies. (*Quickly, without a stop.*) Fine open airy situation beautiful view of the sky on a clear day nice clean pavement in front and a large drying ground at the back—terms moderate no extra charge for any thing. every thing being included in everything.

Post. (*Impatiently.*) Never mind the apartments. Did you say *two* Miss Smiths?

Mrs. N. Yes, the first-floor is Miss Julia, and the second-floor is Miss Arabella,—which of them is it for?

Post. That is more than I can tell you; it only says, “Miss Smith, at Mrs. Needle's.” Now you know one Miss Smith is just as much Miss Smith as the other Miss Smith,

CHARADE.

and one Miss Smith is just as much at Mrs. Needle's as the other Miss Smith is at Mrs. Needle's.

Mrs. N. No, not nearly as much—the first-floor goes out a great deal oftener than the second.

Post. (*Rubbing his forehead.*) It's a puzzler.

Mrs. N. I wonder if it is a Valentine—give it to me.

[*Holds her hand to take it.*

Post. (*Withholding it from her.*) Mrs. Needle, you are a specimen of feminine curiosity; if I had known you wished so much for a Valentine, I would have sent you one, and brought it myself.

Mrs. N. Mr. Postman, you are impertinent this morning! As if I cared for such trumpery things as Valentines—as if I hadn't got heaps and heaps of beauties piled up in a cupboard, that I had sent to me before I married my poor, dear, departed Peter Packing Needle! (*Heaves a sigh.*) I am sure there is nothing half so sweet and flowery in your bag as one I had sent me, about—

The Rose is red, the Violet's blue,
Carnation's sweet and—

Enter BARNABY, interrupts her.

Bar. Please mum, Miss Wiggins wants to know what the postman is stopping here so long for—she has been watching for him these two hours.

Post. Tell her, I'm detained by "urgent private affairs," but I was just a-coming.

[*Exit BARNABY.*

Post. Well Mrs. Needle, they must settle it between them.

CHARADE.

Mrs. N. I don't want to touch it. (*Turns away.*) Here comes my first-floor—I dare say it is for her.

Enter MISS JULIA SMITH.

Miss J. S. (*To POSTMAN.*) I am Miss Smith. Is there a letter for me?

Post. Well, ma'am, there is a letter, but I can't tell whether it is for you, as I understand there are two Miss Smiths in the house.

Miss J. S. Oh I have no doubt it is for me, I—expected a letter this morning. [*Holds out her hand for it.*]

Enter MISS ARABELLA SMITH.

Miss A. S. And so do I. (*To POSTMAN.*) I am Miss Smith. Is there not a letter for me?

Post. (*To Miss J. S.*) Do you know the writing, ma'am?
[*Shews her the letter.*]

Miss J. S. Certainly I do, it is my cousin's hand, disguised.

Miss A. S. (*To Miss J. S.*) And pray ma'am, how do you know it if it is disguised?

Miss J. S. I know it by the curl of the "M."

Post. (*To Miss A. S.*) Do you know the writing ma'am?
[*Shews her the letter.*]

Miss A. S. Of course I do, it is for me, from—Adolphus; I should know his "S's" amongst a thousand.

Enter BARNABY.

Bar. Postman, Miss Wiggins says, if you don't go on delivering the letters directly, she 'll report you!

CHARADE.

Post. Report me—will she? Then I must be off like a shot, or there will be a blow-up. [*Exit* BARNABY.]

Post. Well, ladies, I must leave this letter between you; I can't do any fairer.

[*Holds forth the letter.* MISS A. and MISS J. each seize an end. [*Exit* POSTMAN, singing, "I shan't get home this morning," &c.

Miss J. (To MISS A.) Will you have the goodness to deliver up my property, ma'am, [*Gives the letter a tug.*

Miss A. (To MISS J.) Will you be so kind as to leave go my property, ma'am? [*Also gives the letter a tug.*

Mrs. N. Ladies, will you allow me to be umpire? I shall be most happy to open the letter and tell you what name is inside.

Both (Indignantly). Certainly not ma'am, no one shall open my letters but myself.

[*Each give another tug, which tears the letter in half, to their mutual consternation.*

Miss J. (To MISS A.) Most unlady-like behaviour!

[*Unfolds the piece left in her hand.*

Miss A. (To MISS J.) There are such things as actions for damages, remember, ma'am! [*Unfolds her piece.*

[*As soon as they see the inside, they each throw their piece indignantly to the other, exclaiming.*

Both. Take your rubbish, ma'am, I am sure it was never meant for me. [*Exit one after the other, singing.*

AIR.—"Cavalier."

For that Valentine, that Valentine, it never was meant for me.

CHARADE.

Mrs. N. Now I can have a peep. (*Picks up the pieces and puts them together.*) Oh! What an ugly thing—a common penny Valentine—yellow bonnet, green dress—with one, two, three, seven flounces, and *such* a crinoline—no wonder they would neither of them own it. I wonder which of them it was really meant for. Well, that's over; now to business. [*Exit, calling* BARNABY.

END OF ACT THE SECOND.

ACT THE THIRD.

THIRD SYLLABLE.

CHARACTERS.

ADA	} <i>Two lady friends living</i>
IDA	
SPIRIT OF CONCORD	

COSTUME.

The Spirit may be represented by either a girl or young boy. The dress should be of flowing white tarlatan, muslin, or net, over azure blue, or blue over white, confined at the waist with a silver band or girdle, arms bare, silver wand, a silver circlet round the head, with a bright star on the forehead.

CHARADE.

OVERTURE.—“ *We have lived and loved together.*”

SCENE.—*Table with books and fancy-work—two lounging chairs—a flower-stand filled with plants, a parrot and canary in cages, a cat upon the hearth-rug.*

Enter ADA and IDA together.

Ida. My dearest friend, let's make a vow,
Always to live as we do now,
With no one but ourselves to please,
No one to trouble us, or tease.
Our birds and plants—your dog—my cat,

Ada. Which, by the by is *very much too fat.*

Ida. I'm sure she's not, so beg you won't say that
I wish we always could agree,
We then should live in perfect harmony.

Ada. Instead of standing, let us sit at ease, [*They sit.*]
And think about our dinner, if you please.
We nothing in the house have got,
And so to day we must have something hot.

Ida. A pair of soles I think, our dinner might begin,
And after that, rump-steak, cut delicately thin.

Ada. Cut *thick*, you mean, with onions, or perhaps with
oyster sauce,
The soles with egg and bread crumbs must be
fried, of course.

Ida. *Fried* fish, you know I really can't endure,
We'll have them *boiled*, that will be better far, I'm
sure.

CHARADE.

Ada. *Boiled soles!* Absurd! We'll have them fried, I say—

Ida. No, no, I am resolved they shall be cooked my way.

Ada (*Rising*). Then you may dine alone, you're contrary to-day. [*Exit.*]

Ida. There,—now I've quarrelled with my dearest friend,

But still, it was *her* fault, however it may end.

I wish I knew some charm to keep all discord out,
But I may wish in vain, I've not the slightest doubt.

The most harmonious instruments don't always keep in tune.

And no one thinks of wondering at a thunder-storm in June.

[*Rises, walks up and down in a disturbed manner.*]

My thoughts I can't control,

Myself I can't console,

I'll pass the matter by.

My sorrows to assuage,

I'll dip into a page

Of true philosophy.

[*Sets herself, takes up a book.*]

Shakespeare! My friend! to thee, to thee, I fly,
I'll read, I'll read,—Oh! This will just apply:

“To boil or not to boil, that is the question.”

[*After a short pause, closes the book.*]

CHARADE.

My attention to fix, I endeavour in vain,
I fear this dispute has disordered my brain.
Concord ! Oh Concord ! come to us again.

[*Soft music heard.* AIR.—“*Auld Lang Syne*,” from
the piano.

Ida (*Looking round astonished*). What sounds are those
I hear—from whence that soothing strain ?

[*Spirit of Concord appears from behind the window-
curtains, or from a conservatory, having been pre-
viously hidden from the audience. Stands before her.*

Ida (*Starting*). A vision ! surely I am dreaming now—
Speak, I implore thee ! Who and what art thou ?

Spirit. At thy call I quickly came,
Spirit of Concord is my name.
Harmony I can restore,
List to the tune you heard before.

[*Music again heard.* *Spirit makes gentle movements
with wand.*

Ida. Exquisite air ! it soothes me more than I can tell.

Spirit. Then safely in thy memory let it dwell,
And when disputes arise—remember what I say,
You’ve but to sing that tune—they’ll gently die
away. [*Vanishes.*

Enter ADA.

Ada. I heard a voice, what stranger has been here ?

[*IDA is in a meditative attitude, and does not answer.*

CHARADE.

I think you might answer me, and not sit silent there.

[Takes up a book, and seats herself with her back to her friend.]

Ida (Aside). That magic tune I hope I recollect,
Its wondrous powers to shew, I'll try direct;
I hope with all my heart 'twill take effect.

[Sings softly a few bars of any tune but the right one.]

Ada (Looking round). Singing indeed! excessively polite,
I think you've taken leave of manners quite.

Ida. In vain, in vain!
I'll try again.

[Sings a few bars of another tune.]

Ada (Starting up). I will not stay here, to be treated so
What would you do without me, I should like to know?

[Resumes her seat, with handkerchief to her eyes.]

Ida. All wrong, all wrong,
'Twas only my new song,
Good Spirit, help me, help me, pray,
Your magic tune has flown away.

[Spirit appears between them. Music heard as before.]

ADA slowly rises and advances to IDA.

Ada. We are not going to quarrel, are we, dear?
'Twas something very like it though, I fear,
I'll say no more my love about the fish,
They shall be cooked exactly as you wish.

CHARADE.

Ida. No, no, indeed, I will not selfish be,
One shall be fried for you, the other boiled for me.
The *sole* and only cause of our dispute is o'er—
In Harmony and Peace we'll live henceforth for
evermore.

[*They join hands and sing, accompanied by the piano,
the first verse of "Auld Lang Syne."*]

"Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind,
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And days of auld lang syne.
We'll tak a cup of kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.
For auld lang syne, my friends,
For auld lang syne,"

END OF ACT THE THIRD.

ACT THE FOURTH.

THE WORD.

CHARACTERS.

MADAME MELPOMENE . . . *directress of a theatre and
advocate for the rights
of women.*

MADemoisELLE ROSALINDA

PENSOROSO *prima donna.*

SIGNORA VARSOVIANA . . . *danseuse.*

MONSIEUR SCRÉPÉSCRAPPÉ . *first violin.*

TRILLO *page to Madame.*

COSTUME.

Madame Melpomene, full dress, opera cloak and fan. The Prima Donna according to taste, rather *négligé*. The Signora might have a black veil on her head, in the Spanish style. Monsieur, black suit and white waistcoat, moustache and imperial. Page in fancy dress livery. A Footman might be substituted for the Page.

OVERTURE.—“*Oh no ! we never mention her,*” and “*All is lost now.*”

SCENE.—*Drawing-room, easy-chair or couch, table with sheets of manuscript music, opera glass, and bouquet of flowers.*

Enter MADAME MELPOMENE.

Madame. I am really ready—the hour draws nigh—the great event of my life is at hand—be still, my heart—I will be calm. (*Sinks into an easy-chair, and fans herself.*) One quiet half hour I may have—and then—(*Rings a bell. Page appears.*) Trillo, order the carriage to be at the door precisely at seven, and remember I am at home to no one—on no account will I be disturbed.

Trillo (*Bowing low*). Madame, your commands shall be obeyed. *[Exit TRILLO.*

[*MADAME rises, paces the room, speaks thoughtfully, and gradually emphatically.*

Madame. Yes—the hour draws nigh. To-night it will be known that I, Madame Melpomene, Directress of the Royal Imperial Anglais Français Theatre, am also the author and composer of the most sublime opera of the season! A proud and responsible position for an unprotected female!—but why should not women write operas?—why should not they play their part on the world's stage? Why should not *I* rank with Balfe, with Rossini, with Donizetti, with Verdi? Why should not my opera be as well known as *Traviata*, *Trovatore*, or *Satanella*? In *Satanella*, is depicted the “Power of Love.”—I shew Love conquered by the Power of Ambition. There are lady Doctors of Medicine,—why should we not, by degrees, take degrees in all the Arts and Sciences? Courage, “faint heart never won fair lady,” name, fame, and fortune. (*Resumes her seat.*) Let me imagine the scene,—the curtain falls amid thunders of applause, loud

CHARADE.

cries for "The Author," are heard. I appear before the curtain, a shower of bouquets cover the stage, and from henceforth I am known as the celebrated Madame Melpomene! I am warm, the room seems unusually small and close. (*Fans herself violently, and rings a bell.*) Enter TRILLO. Some water, Trillo, bring me a glass of water.

Trillo. Yes, Madame, instantly.

[*Quickly brings a glass of water on a silver salver, and presents it to her, then exit. MADAME drinks a little, and proceeds in a disturbed manner.*

Madame. I have but one cause for uneasiness,—that female who has hitherto so continually persecuted me, but I think I am too near the height of my ambition, for *her* to cast me down now. (*Takes up the music and turns it over.*) It *must* be successful! My Prima Donna, Mademoiselle Rosalinda Penseroso, has a most splendid voice; I only wish she was a little more amiable; she gives herself more airs off the stage than I have given her upon it. My tenor is faultless, he will not disappoint me—I flatter myself that my firstviolin, Monsieur Scrépescrappé, will astonish the public, and throw Wieniawski completely into the shade. I am glad I engaged Signora Varsoviana, her appearance will be very effective in the last scene. (*Piano suddenly strikes up "Old dog Tray," or some such tune. MADAME puts her hands to her ears, and exclaims.*) Oh! that horrid street organ, my nerves will not bear it. (*Rings violently. TRILLO appears.*) A smelling bottle, Trillo, quick, or I shall be ill. (*TRILLO rushes to the mantel-piece for a smelling bottle. MADAME takes it hastily from him :*

CHARADE.

exclaiming.) Run and give that man a halfpenny to go in the next street—directly, mind, or I shall be distracted.

Trillo. I will, Madame, directly—I'll give him one, or two, or even three half-pence, if he won't go without. [*Exit.*

Madame. Oh! if I was but in parliament, my first bill should be to abolish this nuisance—Oh my poor head. (*Music stops abruptly, then in the next street—that is to say, softly plays—*“Still so gently o'er me stealing.”) “Memo'ry does bring back the feeling,” indeed! that horrid organ has quite upset all my organs, unstrung my nerves, and shaken my firmness; I feel as if I were about to have another visit from that *female*. I wish I could say to her “the dagger or the bowl;” she always puts an end to everything I undertake, and now, even now, I fear—(*Tap at the door. MADAME in a startled tone.*) Ha! Who is that knocking at the door?

Enter TRILLO.

Trillo. If it please you, Madame, there is a lady down stairs who says she must see you.

Madame (Angrily). It does *not* please me—did I not tell you to admit no one?

Trillo. Yes, Madame, but the lady said she was sure you would see her when you heard her name.

Madame. Her name! what is it?—Trillo, quickly tell.

Trillo (Putting his hand to his forehead). Indeed, Madame, it is such a long one, that I think I must have left a syllable on every stair as I came up,—it was something about roses and posies, and the First Primer—shall I go and ask her again, Madame?

Madame. No, stay—“Roses, posies, Primer”—I believe it

CHARADE.

is Rosalinda Penseroso, that tiresome Prima Donna—what can she want! (*In a resigned tone.*) Shew her up, Trillo. (*Exit TRILLO. MADAME, in a tone of despair.*) It is of no use struggling against destiny, my star will never be in the ascendant; wherever I go, misfortune follows me. (*Enter MADMOISELLE ROSALINDA PENSEROSO. MADAME rises to meet her.*) Excuse me, mademoiselle, if I am rather alarmed by your visiting me at this hour, I thought you would be dressing for the theatre, but pray take a seat. [*They sit.*

Madmle. R. P. (In a die-away tone.) I came to tell you, Madame, that I find I have a very bad cold coming on. (*Gets up a small cough.*) I could not therefore do such injustice to my voice as to attempt to sing this evening, consequently the performance must be put off, unless, indeed, you can provide yourself with another Prima Donna.

Madame. Put the performance off! why the doors will be open in half an hour! Provide myself with another Prima Donna at a moment's notice!! Mademoiselle, you must be mad!!!

Madmle. R. P. (Quietly.) Pray don't excite yourself Madame; what cannot be cured must be endured.

Madame. I must be strong minded indeed to endure this; but I thought what was coming. That horrid street organ played the Overture to new misfortunes, and the Finale to all my hopes. (*Another tap at the door. MADAME sinks back in her chair.*) Come in.

Enter TRILLO.

Trillo. Please Madame, here's a gentleman who would come up stairs; he says he scrapes a prime violin. (*Voice*

CHARADE.

heard). "Me say Monsieur Scrépéscrappe, sir, Premier Violin.")

Madame. Shew him in.

Enter MONSIEUR SCRÉPÉSCRAPPÉ. Makes profound flourishing bows to both ladies; has one finger conspicuously tied up.

Monsieur (With much gesture). Madame, votre très humble serviteur. Mademoiselle, je suis charmé de vous voir.

Madame. Qu'est ce que c'est, Monsieur, parlez, vite !

Monsieur. Madame, me vare sorry to tell to you—me exceedingly accidentally cut,—me coupé, vare big, me little fingare,—me no play me violin ce soir, c'est impossible ! Vat sall me do ? me fly for madame—me run here, dere, every-vere for madame, but me no play, c'est impossible.

Madame (In an ironical tone.) Pray don't distress yourself, Monsieur ; your cut is not of the slightest consequence I assure you ; be seated, I beg. (*MONSIEUR takes a seat.*) *Another tap at the door. TRILLO throws it open to admit SIGNORA VARSOVIANA. Announces her as "Sing-o'er-her something, Madame."* Ah ! this is the climax. (*The SIGNORA enters the room limping.*) You seem lame, Signora—a foot-stool, Trillo. (*He places one—the SIGNORA seats herself, and with one or two wry faces, puts her feet carefully upon the stool.*) To that circumstance I suppose I may attribute the honour of this visit ?

Signora (In a lively tone). Yes, indeed you may, madame, but do not be alarmed, it will only prevent my dancing for a few nights. I made a great exertion to come to you at once. It being so near the time for the performance, I would not

CHARADE.

trust a messenger. I certainly am very disappointed. I thought I should make quite a sensation in the Opera to-night. I was practising my steps in order to be quite perfect, when I "tripped the light fantastic toe" in reality, I fell, and on recovering my equilibrium found I had sprained my ankle. I consoled myself, however, with the hope that you would not be able to get any one to supply my place.

Madame. Oh! certainly not, it would be in vain to try. My enemy has found me out!

Monsieur. (*Starting up.*) Madame'semie! vere? me vill find him out, and shoot him.

Madame. (*Waving her hand.*) Your valour is not needed, Monsieur, my enemy is only visible in the ruin she causes.

Enter TRILLO,

Trillo. It is seven o'clock, Madame, and the carriage is at the door.

Madame. (*Rises.*) Carriage waiting to take me to the Royal Imperial Anglais Français Theatre, at the doors of which large placards announce—"This Evening, for the First time, an Entirely New Opera, with new performers, new scenery, new dresses, new everything! And *here* are the principal performers, like Chelsea Pensioners, all disabled! Fine news for the public! Am I not visited by—

Omnes. What? Who?

Madame. Ask those ladies and gentlemen, who, and what I mean.

[*Piano plays, Air.*—"Oh, no, we never mention her."
All rise and sing to audience.

CHARADE.

Oh yes! you now can mention her,
Her name you've often heard;
Our play is o'er—we bid you speak,
And say, what is "The Word."

END OF CHARADE THE FIRST.

PETER SIMPLE;
OR, THE VICTIM OF EDITORIAL CRUELTY.
A PATHETIC BALLAD.

Look at that melancholy youth,
With pallid cheek and brow of care;
Of him it may be said in truth,
"He sits in silent sorrow there."

His sad and mournful "owre true tale,"
To list'ning ears I will unfold,
Nor marvel if the cheek grow pale,
While such a tale of woe is told.

Young Peter Simple wooed a maid—
But think not she was earthly fair;
No, he implored the pow'rful aid
Of Poetry's Muse beyond compare.

His nights of vigil—days of thought—
Were recompensed, tho' not too soon,
And when he inspiration caught,
He wrote "A Sonnet to the Moon."

"And now for fame and high renown,
My Sonnet it must published be,
That all my friends in this great town,
My name and poem in print may see."

PETER SIMPLE.

Thus Peter hoped—but sad to tell—

When sent unto a magazine,
The ruthless Editor thought well
To doom his verse to “blush unseen.”

Unconscious of this cause for grief,
A month to Peter seemed an age,
It passed.—He quickly turned each leaf,
And eagerly he scanned each page.

“Not here! Not there!! Not anywhere!!!
Some grand mistake must surely be;
What’s this?” he cried, midst doubt and fear,
“‘*P.S.—Declined with thanks.*’—Oh, me!”

This short, politely-killing line,
Brought Peter Simple very low,
And thought he does not loud repine,
His head’s affected by the blow.

His friends around him come and try
To cheer him with their noisy pranks,
Still he repeats with mournful cry,
“Declined with thanks, declined with thanks!”

MORAL.

List, all young men from far and nigh,
Be modest in your several ranks,
For all vain hopes, when placed too high,
May chance to be—“Declined with thanks!”

CHARADE THE SECOND.

IN TWO SYLLABLES AND THREE ACTS.

ACT THE FIRST.

FIRST SYLLABLE.

CHARACTERS:—

NANETTA	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	}	<i>two country maidens.</i>
SUSETTA.	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	}	
JOHNNIE	:	:	:	:	:	:	:		<i>a young farmer.</i>

COSTUME.

Rustic and picturesque—coloured or black boddices or jackets trimmed with ribbons, white skirts, short enough display rosettes upon the shoes; for Johnnie—a light jacket and gay waistcoat, wide-awake, or straw hat.

OVERTURE.—“*Oh ! dear ! what can the matter be ?*”

Enter SUSETTA.

Sus. Not come home yet ! how long he is. I am getting quite impatient—I cannot sit still any longer.

[Walks about singing,

“ Oh, dear ! what can the matter be,
 Oh, dear !! what can the matter be,
 Oh, dear !!! what can the matter be,
 Johnnie’s so long at the fair.

He promised to buy me a bonnie blue ribbon
 To tie up my bonnie brown hair.”

CHARADE.

(*Looks at herself.*) I almost wish, though, that I had chosen pink ; I think it would have been more becoming. Never mind, I can have pink next time. I hope Johnnie will come soon, or we shall be late at our dance on the green to-night. (*Looks out of window in a listening attitude.*) I hear some one ; it must be him—he shall not see me waiting. I'll hide. [*Hides herself behind one of the window-curtains.*]

Enter NANETTA.

Nan. I wish Johnnie would come, I have been watching for him this half hour. (*Walks about singing the same as SUSSETTA.*) “Oh, dear ! what can the matter be,” &c., &c. (*At the conclusion of her song, surveys her dress admiringly.*) I was very undecided between blue and rose-colour ; rose-colour would have looked more striking, but I think blue suits me best.

[*A voice heard singing “Wait for the waggon,” and the smacking of a whip heard outside.*]

Nan. (*Joyfully.*) Here he is ! Now I'll hide, to punish him for being so long. (*Hides behind the other window-curtain.*)

Enter JOHNNIE, whip in hand.

John. Well, here I am, back at last,—rather behind time I expect, but there are many, I'm sure, who know how hard it is to tear themselves away from the fair, the charming, charming fair. (*Sings, with a whip accompaniment, Air, last part of “Oh, charming May,” “Oh, charming fair,” &c., &c., and concludes with a bow, intended for the lady part of the audience.*) Now I'll look at the fairings I've bought. (*Lays down the whip, and takes from his pocket, carefully folded in paper, a long piece of blue ribbon—holds it up and examines it.*) *SUSSETTA and NANETTA each peeping from behind her curtain.*



2nd Chorus.—Act I.

"The Ribbons."

P. 35.

Well I really think it is a very handsome piece of ribbon ; I told him to give me the best, as it was for a handsome young maiden.

[Susetta and Nanetta slip from their hiding places, and without heeding JOHNNIE'S surprise, exclaim, both together.

Both. Oh ! Johnnie dear, what a beautiful blue ribbon ! And did you say I was a handsome young maiden ?

Nan. It is not for you, Susetta, it is for me.

Sus. It is not for you, Nanetta, it is for me.

Nan. Johnnie, dear, didn't you buy that ribbon for me ?

Sus. Johnnie, dear, didn't you buy it for me ?

[JOHNNIE holds the ribbon in one hand, and puts the other to his ear.

Joh. Susetta, Nanetta, be quiet, I pray,
To neither together, a word can I say.

Nan. Well, Johnnie, say which of us it is for.

Sus. Yes, Johnnie, you might say who it is for.

Joh. Why, it is certainly for one of you, but I am sure I don't mind which.

Sus. (*proudly turning away*). Then I am sure I shall not have it.

Nan. (*beginning to cry*). Oh, Johnnie, how unkind ! when you know you promised——

Joh. Hush, you silly little thing ; I know I promised, and I have kept my promise, and brought you each a piece of ribbon ; but as you both chose the same colour it does not matter who has this piece, because I have another exactly like it in my pocket. (*Brings forth another piece of folded paper, from which he takes a similar ribbon, and presents one to each.*

CHARADE.

Both. Oh, thank you, Johnnie—how kind! It was very silly of us, we might have known you would not forget.

Joh. Well, now the important point of “Who is it for?” is settled, so kiss and be friends. (*The two girls embrace.*)

Sus. And now, in return for the ribbon, I must give you a flower, which I picked on purpose for you.

[*Detaches a flower from her dress, and puts it in his button-hole.*]

Nan. And I also have a flower for Johnnie. [*Presenting it.*]

John. Ah! that’s right; fasten it here—that will make both sides even. And now you have adorned me, I advise you to go and try the effect of the ribbon on your pretty little heads; remember the dance on the green to-night. I expect you both will be “Blue Belles.”

All sing, AIR.—“*Blue Bells of Scotland.*”

O, yes, and O yes we [you] both will Blue Belles be,
And we will dance and pass the hours away so merrily,
For now, and O now, I am sure we all agree.

[*Exeunt Omnes.*]

END OF ACT THE FIRST.

CHARADE.

ACT THE SECOND.

SECOND SYLLABLE.

CHARACTERS.

MRS. FITZJENKINS	<i>lady of the house.</i>
HORATIO	<i>her son.</i>
LADY HANDITOVER	<i>a visitor.</i>
THOMAS	<i>footman.</i>

COSTUME.

Very fashionable attire for the ladies—home and morning-visiting dress; for the footman, full livery—a red or blue waistcoat may easily be managed by tacking something the colour over the one to be worn by the performer; a cambric handkerchief, trimmed with lace, will make a good neck-tie; silk stockings, and large rosettes in the shoes.

OVERTURE.—“*Such a Getting Up Stairs.*”

SCENE.—*Breakfast Room.*

Enter HORATIO. A pencil and note-book in his hand—appears very meditative—pushes his hair off his forehead—taps it with his pencil, and looks up to the ceiling.

Hor. How can I write, with such a disturbance in the house! driven first from one room and then from another, my ideas have become quite scattered; all the house seems to be wanted for the party to-night. (*Sits himself at a small table.*) Let me see, shall I wear stick-ups, or turn-downs, or all-rounders? Why, turn-downs, of course, à la Byron; ah! some day, perhaps the name of Horatio Fitzjenkins will give

CHARADE.

style to a shirt-collar! I wish I could find a nice rhyme to "moon," (*taps his forehead*)—"moon"—"moon"—ah! "noon," of course, will do beautifully; let me see (*writes*).

"The lady moon
Looks pale at noon;
From glaring day
She shrinks away,
And hides her lovely face."

Hor. Bravo! I really think that transcends anything I have ever written.

Enter MRS. FITZJENKINS. (*Sits herself with an air of fatigue.*)

Mrs. F. Well, at last all the preparations for my *soirée* are finished, and I feel quite ready for a chop. I am glad I told Mr. Fitzjenkins that I could not have him home to dinner to-day. [*Rings a bell.*]

Enter FOOTMAN, *hurriedly putting on his gloves.*

Mrs. F. Thomas, have you cleaned the candelabra?

Thomas. Yes, ma'am; I've polished 'em well—used plenty of elbow-grease.

Mrs. F. (*In a horrified tone.*) Grease! Thomas, grease! to my silver candelabra!

Thomas. Yes, ma'am, elbow-grease—nothing like it, ma'am.

Mrs. F. Really, Thomas, you are too vulgar to live in a genteel family; I cannot be supposed to understand such coarse, countrified expressions—remember, I give a *soirée* to-night, and expect regular footman-like behaviour—do try and behave as if you had lived *somewhere* with *somebody*.

Thomas. Yes, ma'am, so I did, ma'am—I'm sure I didn't live nowheres with nobody.

CHARADE.

Mrs. F. There, hold your tongue—I hope you have a clean pair of gloves ready.

Thomas. Certainly, ma'am, "spotless as the driven snow," as Master Horatio said one day, so I am sure that must be *very* genteel.

Mrs. F. You may go, Thomas, and bring up the chops directly. [*Exit* THOMAS.]

Mrs. F. Well, I don't think I shall very often give *soirées*; they are a great deal of trouble, especially with such an awkward footman—I shall be obliged to give him warning although his wages are so low. Oh, dear! I think I had better have kept to my little boy in buttons; but I don't see why I should not have a footman as well as Mrs. Simpkinson.

Enter THOMAS.

Thomas. Please, ma'am, what will you have your dinner on; all the best crockery is laid out for supper?

Mrs. F. Crockery, indeed! can't you say "china," or "the dinner service;" did I not give you a lesson about using such common words? bring it in anything, any plates out of the kitchen will do. [*Exit* THOMAS.]

Mrs. F. Horatio, what are you tapping your forehead so for?

Hor. To let my ideas run out, to be sure, mamma; please don't interrupt me, I want to finish my poem on "Moonlight." (*Continues writing.*)

Mrs. F. Well, remember I shall expect you to recite to-night; it is not every one who has a genius for their son. Mrs. Simpkinson cannot vie with me there.

[*Enter* THOMAS, with a tray, upon which is a covered dish, plates, knives and forks, &c.; sets it upon a small

CHARADE.

table. Loud knock and ring heard—THOMAS rushes out, and returns with a visiting card upon a silver salver.

Thomas. Please, ma'am, are you at home? Lady in a carriage waiting at the door.

MRS. FITZJENKINS reads—"LADY HANDITOVER."

Mrs. F. Good gracious, Thomas, no, I don't think I can possibly be at home—yet, stay—I should like Mrs. Simpson to see her Ladyship's carriage standing at my door. But what can we do with these dinner-things, there is no room but this to show her into—the drawing-room is cleared out for dancing, and supper is laid in the dining-room. Oh, I know! put them behind the curtains. Come, Horatio, help.

[They scramble dish, &c., off the table, and hide them behind the curtains. THOMAS exits, and, returning, announces LADY HANDITQVER.]

Lady H. (Aside.) What a smell of mutton chops!

[The usual civilities pass between the Ladies; then

Lady H. (opens the conversation by saying)—Is that your son, Mrs. Fitzjenkins?

Mrs. F. Yes, he is my only child; and although very young, I can assure your ladyship he is a genius.

Lady H. Indeed! in what way does his genius show itself?

Mrs. F. Poetry, your ladyship. Horatio, stand up and give her ladyship a specimen—repeat those pretty lines you composed "On a Dead Caterpillar."

Hor. (Stands up.)

I saw a Caterpillar lay
Upon the gravel path one day—

[Hesitates, and looks up to the ceiling.]

CHARADE.

Upon the gravel path one day,
I saw—a Caterpillar lay.

Lady H. Poor boy, he has forgotten it—never mind, most men of genius are absent—we will excuse him the rest,

(*Aside*) with a great deal of pleasure.

Lady H. And now, my dear Mrs. Fitzjenkins, you are, no doubt, aware that I am President of the Society for the Extension of the Knowledge of the Art of Making Pastry amongst the Rising Generation of Young Ladies in Great Britain, Ireland, and all the Colonies; I very much wish for your influential name in my list of subscribers; I hope you will not refuse to give me a subscription. There is a list of names with amounts already subscribed (*hands her a paper*); if your name appears I am sure we shall have all the fashionable people in the place.

Mrs. F. Well, really, I cannot say—I will speak to Mr. Fitzjenkins.

Lady H. Excuse me, I should not think there was any need of that. I am sure Mr. Fitzjenkins thinks all that you do the “wisest, discreetest, and best;” besides, you are a mother.

Mrs. F. Yes, but not of a young lady—only of an only son, my own and only darling one.

[*Looking affectionately at HORATIO.*]

Lady H. Yes; but consider, your son may one day marry one of the young ladies of Great Britain, Ireland, or the Colonies, then think what a satisfaction it will be to your feelings to know that you have subscribed liberally to the Society for the Extension of the Knowledge of the art of Making Pastry amongst the Rising Generation of Young Ladies in Great Britain, Ireland, and all the Colonies; if your daughter-in-law should not know how to make pastry, you will have nothing to reproach yourself with.

Mrs. F. Does pastry-making include cakes? Horatio is very fond of cake.

Lady H. Yes, of every description; in fact, this art has become so extremely fashionable that it has entirely superseded potichomanie and leather work, even embroidery will soon be a secondary consideration; and, in a little time, none but good, plain cooks will be needed, as all the fancy work will be done by the ladies.

Mrs. F. I think I heard that the Society intended founding a College.

Lady H. Yes, I am now collecting funds for that purpose, and with your valuable assistance hope to raise sufficient; we shall then have professors to instruct young ladies in all the various branches of the art.

Mrs. F. Well, it is certainly a very useful thing to subscribe to; I think I must give two guineas. (*Takes out her purse, hands LADY HANDITOVER the money, and puts her name on the paper.*)

Lady H. Oh, thank you; but I expected no less from your well-known liberality. (*Rises and takes her leave.*)

Hor. Oh, ma! what a lot of money to give away.

Mrs. F. I had my reasons, Horatio; I saw that Mrs. Simpkinson was down for two pounds, so, of course, I made it guineas. I could not think of giving less.

THOMAS *rushes in.*

Thomas. Oh, if you please, ma'am, the kitchen chimney's on fire; cook upset all the fat in it. Shall I run for the engine?

Mrs. F. (*In dismay.*) Oh dear, dear, dear, what shall we do! engines! no, I will have no engines here, why they'll deluge the place with water; cook must put it out herself.

Hor. Oh, ma, don't you smell the soot? I do. I shall go and see. (*Throws down his note-book and runs out.*)

[*Mrs. F. and THOMAS follow. Mrs. F. exclaiming—If she does not put it out directly I will give her warning.*

END OF ACT THE SECOND.

CHARADE.

ACT THE THIRD.

THE WORD.

CHARACTERS.

ROSE DROP *queen of Toffee Land.*
LADY CARRAWAY COMFIT . . . *maid of honour.*
LADY BARLEY SUGAR-STICK . . *first lord in waiting.*
CANDIED PEEL *page.*

COSTUME.

The Queen must be very richly dressed, and look as royal as possible, with a train or long sweeping dress—rose colour being predominant. Lady Carraway Comfit's attire should be principally white; for Lord Barley Sugar Stick, as near an approach to a court dress as can be contrived, and instead of a sword a dagger, twisted with yellow silk to represent a barley sugar stick; for the Page, a boy's tunic, trimmed with scarlet, ruffles and a falling collar of lace, white gloves, and rosettes on the shoes.

OVERTURE.—“*Mourir pour la patrie.*”

SCENE.—*Room in a castle on Almond Rock, marble side-table with refreshments on silver.*

[*Enter QUEEN ROSE DROP, attended by LADY CARRAWAY COMFIT. QUEEN seats herself languidly in a large easy chair; LADY C. places a footstool, and then hands her some refreshment.*

Lady C. C. Let me beseech your Majesty to take some refreshment; I fear your health will suffer, it is so very long since you have eaten anything.

Queen. (With a royal wave of the hand.) Take it away—I

CHARADE.

cannot eat ; and why do you call me "Majesty?" Princess Rose Drop is now my only title ; thanks to my ungrateful subjects, who have driven me from my rich kingdom of Toffee Land, and placed that odious, vulgar, proud Princess Peppermint on *my* throne, only because they were cowardly enough to be frightened at her large army of Black Jacks with their strong Clove sticks. You, my sweet Lady Carraway, are the only comfort I have left.

Lady C. C. Ah ! gracious madam, it makes me weep to think of what you have suffered. I will never forgive Lord Barley Sugar Stick for deserting you in the hour of danger ; forced to fly by night for our lives, until we were safe in this strong castle on Almond Rock—with only one attendant, the faithful Page, young Candied Peel. But let me beseech you, most gracious Princess, to take comfort ; the Page told me just now that he had something of importance to communicate to your Highness, will you allow me to summon him to your presence ?

Queen. As you please, dear Lady Carraway.

[*LADY C. C. rings a bell, the PAGE appears, bows lowly, and stands before her Majesty.*

Queen. Lady Carraway Comfit informs me that you have something of importance to tell me ; what is it, my faithful Page ? Speak, and conceal nothing.

Page. (Bowing.) May it please your Royal Highness, I went into the village this morning, to get in the supplies of provisions we require, and I heard it rumoured that the people had risen by Hundreds and Thousands in several parts of Toffee Land, and that proud Queen Peppermint would soon be dethroned, and our rightful Queen Rose Drop re-instated on the throne of her ancestors.

Queen (vehemently). Never ! They may rise in my favour—they may kneel in supplication—but never will I be their Queen again. I cannot forgive my ungrateful subjects for the cruel manner in which they deserted me. Let them keep

CHARADE.

their Queen Peppermint ! I will live and die in my castle on Almond Rock.

[A great noise and loud cheers heard outside. "Hurrah ! hurrah ! for QUEEN ROSE DROP, down with QUEEN PEPPERMINT."

Queen. Hark ! what is that ? "My pretty Page, look out, look out, afar." *[Exit PAGE, backwards.*

Lady C. C. (clasping her hands in terror). "Hear you the thunder of the war, the thunder of the war ?" *(Both listen intently.)*

Enter PAGE.

Page. May it please your Highness, a deputation from the nobles of Toffee Land waits without.

Queen. I will not see them.

Lady C. C. Let me beseech your Highness not to decide hastily, consider ; suppose Queen Peppermint should really be dethroned, what a state Toffee Land would be in without a Queen ! at least, hear what they have to say.

Queen. Who heads the deputation ?

Page. Lord Barley Sugar Stick and General Bull's Eye, may it please your Highness.

Queen. I will see Lord Sugar Stick, but no other noble shall enter my presence. *[PAGE bows and exits backwards.*

Lady C. C. Lord Barley Sugar Stick returned to his duty at last ! nevertheless I will not forgive him, if I can help it.

[Enter PAGE, ushering in LORD SUGAR STICK, who bows lowly, and drops upon one knee before her Majesty ; PAGE retreats to a little distance.

Queen. You may speak, most loyal Lord Barley Sugar Stick.

Lord B. S. S. Most gracious and royal Lady, will you of your infinite goodness and unmerited condescension forgive me, and all your unhappy subjects, our disloyalty—of which

CHARADE.

we bitterly repent—and return to reign over us; the whole kingdom of Toffee Land, and the population of All Sorts, have united in expelling proud Queen Peppermint and her army of Black Jacks. It was a glorious conflict—your Majesty's own regiment of Bull's Eyes particularly distinguished themselves, and our Brandy Balls did great execution; the enemy's Clove Sticks were broken to shivers, and we drove them across the Lemonade Seas to their own little Floating Island. We are all now anxiously waiting and hoping for our gentle Queen Rose Drop, and if she will only forgive us this once, we will serve her faithfully for evermore.

[The QUEEN puts her handkerchief to her face, but does not answer.]

Lord B. S. S. Sweet Lady Carraway, plead for us.

Lady C. C. May it please your Majesty—I will answer for the sincerity of Lord Barley Sugar Stick's repentance.

Queen. You, Lady Carraway, have been my only friend, my only comfort—if you wish it, I yield—to you Toffee Land owes its Queen. Rise, Lord Sugar Stick, your petition is granted, I forgive you.

[QUEEN extends her hand, which he kisses—then rises; the PAGE exits hastily and returns immediately, bearing the royal crown upon a cushion; LORD B. S. S. places it on the QUEEN's head; then taking LADY C. COMFIT's hand, they stand on one side of her MAJESTY and the PAGE on the other, and sing, accompanied by music from the piano, and a chorus of distant voices—]

AIR.—“God Save the Queen.”

“Long live Rose Drop, our Queen,
Long live our gentle Queen,
Once more to reign.

CHARADE.

Send her victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us,
Rose Drop our Queen."

END OF CHARADE THE SECOND.

CHARADE THE THIRD.

ROMANTIC AND OPERATIC.

IN TWO SYLLABLES AND THREE CONNECTED
ACTS.

ACT THE FIRST.

FIRST SYLLABLE.

CHARACTERS.

COUNT ADOLPHE.

BARON GRIMBERG.

CURLINE *his daughter.*

LOUISE *her attendant.*

TWO FAIRIES

OVERTURE.—"*Through the Wood,*" changing to "*Come
where my Love lies Dreaming.*"

SCENE.—*Fairy dell in a wood on the domain of BARON GRIM-
BERG ; green baize spread over the drawing-room carpet*

CHARADE.

to represent turf; cushions underneath to form hillocks; fir-trees in pots, and orange-trees in tubs, oleanders, &c., ad libitum, ranged against the walls; rustic seats on one side; the end of the room must lead into a conservatory, the entrance to which should be draped with green curtains.

[CURLINE discovered reclining in a shady nook in the fairy dell. Seated in the conservatory amongst the plants she appears to have fallen asleep with a book in her hand; two little fairies watch over her, singing softly—

AIR.—“Come where my love lies dreaming.”

1st Fairy. “Soft be thy slumber—thoughts bright and free,
Dance thro’ thy dreams like gushing melody.”

2nd Fairy. “Light is her young heart, light may it be,
Curline of Love lies Dreaming,
Dreaming the happy hours away.”

1st Fairy. Hush! I hear the step of mortal man,
He seeks Curline, let’s hide her if we can.

[They draw the curtains across the entrance.

Enter COUNT ADOLPHE—he looks anxiously round—appears to
be searching for some one.

Adolphe. Curline! Curline!

Where art thou?

Curline! Curline!

I call thee now,

But still hear no reply,

Save the soft breezes’ murmuring sigh,

Which seems to say, Curline, Curline!

I seek thee in this fairy dell,

Where first I felt the magic spell

That binds me unto thee.

Where first thine eyes were raised to mine,

CHARADE.

Where first my hand felt touch of thine,
Beneath this spreading tree.

Sings :—

AIR.—“ *Gentle Troubadour.*”

“ Maiden, most enchanting,
Thy loved name I’m calling,
See, the sunbeams slanting
O’er yon lordly tower ;
’Neath this shady linden tree,
At the well-known hour,
I will sing love’s song to thee,
Maiden, I adore.”

[The two fairies appear at the entrance of the conservatory.

1st Fairy. Hush, hush ! the maiden sleeps.

2nd Fairy. Wake her not !

[They wave him back with their wands.

Adolphe (stepping back astonished).

And who are you ? and whence come you ?
Ethereal little beings two !

1st Fairy. We are the fairies of this dell.

2nd Fairy. “ Here in cool grot and mossy cell,
We rural fays and fairies dwell.”

1st Fairy. We guard the slumbers of Curline ;

2nd Fairy. We watch by her, ourselves unseen ;

1st Fairy. Let her sleep, she will wake to sorrow,

2nd Fairy. Your love will keep, come again to-morrow.

Adolphe (in wonder).

I’ve heard that fairies haunt this dell.

2nd Fairy. Be not afraid, we wish you well.

1st Fairy. The course of true love never did run smooth,

2nd Fairy. And Curline’s father will not you approve.

Adolphe. How know you that ?

1st Fairy. We know more than mortals know,
Be advised and straightway go.

CHARADE.

Adolphe (advancing).

I cannot, no, I will not go.

[*Voices heard in the distance singing.*

AIR.—“*The Elfin Call.*”

“Come away, Elves, where the dew is sweet,
Come to the dingles where the fairies meet.”

2nd Fairy. Hark! we are called, we must attend our Queen.

1st Fairy (to ADOLPHE).

We wish much to befriend you and Curline,
If you won't take advice, perhaps you'll take
this ring. [*Holds up a glittering ring.*

[*Voices singing :—*

“Now that the lilies have spread their bells,
Over the woods and the forest dells,
Come, come away.”

2nd Fairy. Quick, quick, we must depart, our sisters for us
sing.

Adolphe (taking the ring).

How can this help me? for you seem to say,
There will be difficulty in my way.

1st Fairy. Worn on your finger when you wish to be un-
seen,
’T will render you invisible—you thus may help
Curline.

[*Voices singing*].—Come, come away.

Adolphe. Stay, take my thanks.

[*Fairies disappear into the conservatory.*

Adolphe (curiously examining the ring).

This fairy ring may prove indeed a prize,
’Tis bright—almost as bright as Curline’s eyes.

[*Looks into the conservatory, exclaims—*

CHARADE.

Ah! she is there! she sleeps! Those beauteous
eyes are closed to light of day,
She smiles! she dreams of me, perhaps, the
breezes with her tresses play,
And waft the tendrils of her hair,
Shading cheek and brow so fair.

(*Sings.*)

“Come where my love lies dreaming,
Dreaming the happy hours away,
In visions bright redeeming
The fleeting joys of day.
Dreaming the happy hours,
Dreaming the happy hours away;
Come where my love is dreaming so sweetly,
Dreaming the happy hours away.”
She moves—she comes—now I will try the ring.
[*Puts the ring on his finger.*]

CURLINE *appears at the entrance of the conservatory—
looks round with a bewildered air—does not seem to
see ADOLPHE.*

Curline. I thought I heard his voice, it was a dream, I
fear,
And yet—the beating of my heart tells me that
he is near.

[*ADOLPHE takes off the ring.*]

Curline. Adolphe!

Adolphe. Curline! (*advancing towards her*).

*Enter LOUISE, who rushes in between them, and appears
out of breath.*

Louise. Oh, lady, dearest lady, oh, how I have been
running,
The Baron, my master, your papa, is coming, oh,
he's coming,

CHARADE.

And he is so cross, and he wants you directly,
and he looks and speaks like thunder;
And who has done anything to make him so, I'm
sure I don't know.

Curline. What can be the matter, I wonder?
Pray go, Adolphe, some other time I'll introduce
you to papa,
A stranger now might anger him.

Adolphe. I go (*aside*), but I'll not go far.

[*Rumbling music, descriptive of a storm, gradually increasing in sound.*

[*Exit ADOLPHE.*

[*CURLINE and LOUISE retire into the conservatory.*

END OF ACT THE FIRST.

ACT THE SECOND.

SECOND SYLLABLE.

SCENE.—*The same.*

[*Enter BARON GRIMBERG—he walks with a stick, and appears very hot and angry.*

Baron (*calling loudly*).

Louise! Louise!
I saw her come this way,
Louise! Louise! I say.

[*LOUISE appears from the conservatory, drops a frightened curtsey.*

Baron (*shaking his stick at her*).





3rd Charade—Act 2.

"The Garden Scene."

P. 53.

CHARADE.

For this you shall pay,
Take warning to-day,
In a month you shall go, go,
Yes, you shall go !

[Knocks his stick violently on the ground.]

Louise (clasping her hands).

What have I done, my lord ?

What have I done ?

Baron. What have you not done ? Have you not neglected
your mistress, the Lady Curline, my daughter,
the Baron Grimberg's daughter ; have you not
allowed her to walk forth alone, and unattended,
despite my express commands ? for this you shall
go ; yes, you shall go, go, go !

Louise (in distress). Oh, no ! oh, no ! oh, no !

Baron. Where is Curline ? find her instantly !

Curline (appears from the conservatory).

Here am I, my father.

Louise is not in fault, I came here with my book,
And overcome with heat, slept in this shady nook.

[LOUISE sings.]

AIR.—“ *My pretty Page.*”

“ Pray let me stay,

{ Don't send me away.

Baron (seating himself). { You shall go away.

Curline Pray let her stay.

Baron. { She shall go away.

Louise. { Don't send me away,

I shall weep if you do.

To CURLINE. For I love you as well as you know who.

Curline. As I know who ?

Louise. Yes, yes, as you know who !

Curline. As I ?

Louise. As you ! &c.

CHARADE.

Curline. I?

Louise. You ! &c.

Baron. You shall go away.

Louise & Curline. Oh, pray let { *me*
 her } stay.

Baron. Go, go, away.

Louise & Curline. Must { *I*
 she } go, do let { *me*
 her } stay, &c.

[*Exit LOUISE in tears.*]

[*CURLINE sits upon a grassy mound.*]

Baron. Curline, I'm very much displeased with you.

Curline. With me, my father, why? oh, tell me, do!

[*Enter ADOLPHE, wrapped in a dark cloak—he wears the fairy ring, consequently glides in unperceived, and stations himself behind the BARON.*]

Baron (emphatically).

Some time ago I told you that we were very poor,
 That poverty would very soon be knocking at our
 door;

That once let in our ancient house would crumble
 to decay,

Our house that has for centuries so proudly held its
 sway.

I told you that Count Philip much wished you for
 his bride,

And that his wealth would prop our house, and save
 from fall my pride.

But you, most disobedient child, think nought of
 house or land,

And now, Count Philip tells me plain, he does
 refuse your hand!

Curline (delighted). Refuse my hand!!

Adolphe (delighted and surprised). Refuse her hand!!!

CHARADE.

Baron (turning round).

What's that, I heard a voice, and yet no one I see.

Curline (looking anxiously round).

I heard it, too, but see no one,

An Echo it must be.

Baron (continues).

He says you treat him with disdain, that he has
changed his mind,

That he has found a lady both more lovely and
more kind.

Adolphe. I am rejoiced to hear it!

Baron. Rejoiced to hear it, did you say? unkind, ungrate-
ful child,

Take care, Curline, you'll drive me wild; yes, you
will drive me wild.

Curline. I did not say it, though it was an echo to my
thought,

I could not love Count Philip, and I wish he'd never
sought

To marry me.

Baron. Then farewell house and land,

All, all must go.

Adolphe (in a deep sepulchral voice).

Man! wouldst thou sell thy daughter's hand?

Baron (jumping up).

Eh, what, some spy is here—come out, come out, I
say. [*Beats about the trees with his stick.*]

ADOLPHE is obliged to dodge to avoid being
struck.

Curline. The wood seems to be haunted, father dear, we'd
better come away.

Baron. These woods must go,

I money owe,

Our ancient house must fall, if money I can't get,

I cannot keep it up—

Adolphe. Then put it up "To Let."

Baron (indignantly).

To Let! our house to Let! you mocking fiend,
avaunt! [*Fights in the air with his stick.*

A goblin for some purpose bad I'm sure this place
must haunt.

To Let! The House of Grimberg up to Let!!

Adolphe. 'Twould fetch a tidy rent.

Baron. And rend my heart to pieces—to that I'll ne'er
assent,

My castle up to Let!

Adolphe (echoes). To Let!! to Let!!!

[*BARON turns round quickly, ADOLPHE slips behind him.*

Baron. Whoe'er you are, avaunt! I've not come to that
yet.

'Tis very strange, I like it not—

If I could only find him,
I'd strike his head off on the spot,
Or—to keep the peace—I'd bind him
Hand and foot, and spare his crown,
For ransom rich, in money down.

That thought is somewhat good,
I'll call my vassals and we'll search the wood.

Curline, unto your chamber at once you will retire,
And when the next rich suitor comes, remember
my desire. [*Exit BARON.*

[*ADOLPHE remains still, looking at CURLINE, but does not
discover himself.*

Curline. How strange, could it have been a sprite?

Oh, where art thou, Adolphe?
Alas! I know not thy abode,
Or whether thou hast wealth;
I only know that thou art noble,
Noble in heart and rank,
And *think* thou lovest me.

CHARADE.

[*ADOLPHE takes off the ring, throws off his cloak, and advances.*

Curline. Adolphe! thou hast been here, and thou hast heard—

Adolphe. I have been here unseen—I wore a fairy ring
Which rendered me invisible—wilt thou forgive me
That I played the spy? I hoped to hear
How I might win thee. I have heard all,
And I must think upon it—wilt thou meet me here
In this loved spot to-morrow, at the self-same
hour?

Curline (hesitatingly).

Louise and I perhaps may wander hither.
It is my favourite walk—
But thou must see my father, he must know thee,
Or I know thee no more.

Adolphe. He shall know me as Count Adolphe,
Not as the goblin who did so torment him;
I felt so angry that I could not help it,
But if he knew I was the daring man who did
propose
To put his old baronial castle up to let,
He would not let me speak to thee again—
E'en if I saved my head.
Dearest and fairest, I will leave thee now,
When next we meet I pray it may be happily.

Curline. Farewell.

Adolphe. Until to-morrow, fare thee well. [*Exit ADOLPHE.*

Curline (gazing anxiously after him).

Did he believe that I was rich?
And will he change?
No, no, I will not think it.

[*Exit to slow music—"The Tempest of the Heart."*

END OF ACT THE SECOND.

CHARADE.

ACT THE THIRD.

THE WORD.

OVERTURE.—“*Good bye, Sweetheart, Good bye.*”

SCENE.—*The same—twenty-four hours must be supposed to have elapsed since the Second Act.*

[*Enter CURLINE attended by LOUISE—she seats herself languidly.*

Curline. How hot it is ! I scarcely thought that I could reach the dell,

I seem to have no strength.

Louise. Dearest lady, you are not well.
Shall I fan you, shall I bring
Cooling water from the spring?
Or to please you shall I sing?
I know a new and pretty song.

Curline. Sing it, then, if not too long.

[*LOUISE seats herself at a little distance from her mistress, and displays some Berlin wool work, upon which she employs herself whilst singing.*

AIR.—“*Gaily the Troubadour.*”

[*Sings.*

“*Gaily the gold-digger shouldered his spade,
Gaily he thought on the fortune he'd made,
Singing, 'From Australia hither I come,
Laden with gold, lady love, welcome me home.'*

“*She for the gold-digger hopelessly wept,
Sadly she thought of him whilst others slept,
Singing, 'In search of gold, only didst thou roam,
Gold-digger, gold-digger, come to thy home.'*

“*Under the balcony softly he came,
Under the balcony breathing her name,*

CHARADE.

Singing, 'From Australia hither I've come,
Laden with gold, lady love, welcome me home.' "

And they were married and lived happy for ever after.

Curline. It would have been much happier for them if he
had not gone.

Louise. But then, my lady, don't you see, there would have
been no song.

Do you feel better now?

Curline. But little.

[Rises, walks about in an agitated manner.]

I cannot sit, I cannot rest,
Louise, art sure my father's stranger guest
Was Count Adolphe?

Louise. My lady, as I said before, I say,
It was the Count Adolphe, I saw him ride away.
And here he comes!

[Takes up her work and retires into the conservatory.]

Curline (resuming her seat and looking towards the door).

He comes! his look is downcast, and his step is
slow—

He sees me, and he hastens—ah, now I all shall
know.

Enter ADOLPHE—he advances quickly, and takes her hand.

Adolphe. Curline, I've sued for this dear hand—
Thy father—

Curline. He says—

Adolphe. No! (*seats himself near her.*)

But I'll not give thee up—say thou wilt not
Forget me, though, unhappily, we should
Be parted for a time.

Curline. What said my father—why did he object?

Adolphe. He plainly said that he had debts, large debts,
That none should woo his daughter who did lack

CHARADE.

The will or power to lend him gold to pay.
Lend was the word he used—and said thus more
 That at his death the lands of Grimberg would
 Amply repay a loan from Grimberg's son-in-law.

Curline. And thou?

Adolphe. I am not poor—

My rank I can support—but still, alas !
 I have no hoard, I have no gold to lend.
 But I will win thee yet, I'll not despair.
 Of me it was predicted long ago,
 That I should owe my fortune to my sword.
 I will unto the wars, do deeds of might,
 Gain honour and renown, and wealth and thee.

(*Sings*). AIR.—“*I'll hang my harp on a willow tree.*”

“I'll leave my heart behind me with thee,
 And I'll off to the wars again ;
 A peaceful home hath great charms for me,
 But the battle-field no pain.
 And the lady I love shall soon be my bride,
 With a diadem on her brow ;
 Oh, how can I tear myself from her side?
 Oh, how can I leave her now ?”

Thou wilt be true to me, *Curline*,
 Thou wilt not forget me?

Curline. Nay, it is thou who may forget—
 Amid new scenes thou wilt new faces see,
 And then, perhaps—

Adolphe. Speak it not. I were not worthy of thy love
 If I could change.
 Give me some token, something that I may cherish
 When far away from thee.
 Dare I ask for one of these ringlets?

Curline (*calls*). Louise! Louise! *Enter LOUISE.*

Louise. My lady, I am here.

CHARADE.

Curline. Your scissors, quick !

[*Takes them from her. Soft music. AIR.*—"Take this cup of sparkling wine." *CURLINE cuts off a ringlet, which, of course, must be a false one, placed for the purpose amongst her own, and gives it to ADOLPHE, singing—*

Take this ringlet, it is thine.

Adolphe. Round my heart it shall entwine,
Ne'er with life will I resign
This token of unchanging love.

(*Continues, changing to "The Standard Bearer."*)

The lady of my love I will not name,
But still I guard her ringlet as a token ;
And never shall expire bright honour's flame,
Nor ever shall my knightly vow be broken.

Curline. But thou, perhaps, on some far-off battle-field
Wilt lie amongst the slain.
Can wealth be won no other way ?
Thy life will be endangered for my sake—
Oh no, it must not be !

Adolphe. Fear not ; I could not go if I had not strong hope
I should return.

[*CURLINE buries her face in her hands. Fairy voices are heard from the conservatory, singing—*

"Away with melancholy,
No doleful changes ring
On life and human folly,
But merrily, merrily, sing, fa, la."

Enter LOUISE.

Louise. My lady, do you hear those voices strange ?

Adolphe. Hush ! be silent.

Curline. Listen.

CHARADE.

Voices continue.

"Come on, ye rosy hours,
Gay smiling moments bring;
We'll strew the way with flowers,
Then merrily, merrily, sing, fa, la."

[*A shower of rose leaves fall upon the turf, and the two fairies appear. LOUISE starts with astonishment, and retreats to a respectful distance.*

Adolphe. You little elfish sprites,
Come you to mock us?

Both. No, no, no.
Have we not said that we are friends.

1st Fairy, to CURLINE.

Lady, dry those tears,
Night gives place to day;
Rosy morn appears,
Clouds all roll away.

2nd Fairy, to ADOLPHE.

Treasure for treasure
Is measure for measure.

In Curline you'll have treasure as long as you live,
For her we will help you rich treasure to give.

Adolphe. Oh, tell me how, and when, and where.

Curline. Must he leave me?

1st Fairy, to ADOLPHE, pointing with her wand.

Dig deep, dig deep
At the foot of that tree;

Both Fairies. Dig deep, dig deep,
And a treasure you'll see.

Adolphe. How can I dig, I have not got a spade?

1st Fairy. But by your sword your fortune can be made.

Adolphe (starting). Ha! the prediction!

CHARADE.

Yes, my sword can cut the turf,
And turn the earth,
At least, I'll try.

Curline. Oh yes, do try.

[*ADOLPHE appears to dig, and after a little time his sword strikes upon something hard. He stoops and brings forth a box.*

Fairies. Open, open, lift the lid,
You will find a treasure hid.

[*ADOLPHE opens the box, and it appears to be filled with gold coins and jewels. They all utter exclamations of pleasure and astonishment.*

Adolphe (to Fairies). And is this mine?

1st Fairy. It fairly is, and all is good and real, you need not doubt—

An ancestor of yours one day was put to rout,
And coming through this wood, with enemies
behind,

Buried his riches here, in hopes no one would find;
And here they've lain secure for many and many
a day,

The Count was killed—so take the gold and use it
as ye may.

Enter BARON. He stares from one to the other, and
speaks angrily.

You hold a court, it seems, *Curline*;
Tell me, what does all this mean?

To Adolphe. And you, young sir, what have you there?
A ringlet of my daughter's hair?
Of my vengeance pray beware.

Adolphe. Baron, do you see this treasure?
I give it you with greatest pleasure.

CHARADE.

Baron (examining the contents of the box).

Ah ! jewels rich and rare—

Oh ! you may keep her hair—

Gold in plenty, what delight !

It is a charming, charming sight.

I will accept this as a loan, and at some future day,

Unto my noble son-in-law the value will repay.

Your hand, Curline. Take her, Count Adolphe, she's yours.

[Joins their hands.]

And now I think we'd better come in-doors.

[Music, "Where the Bee Sucks." Fairies sing.]

Fairies. "Merrily, merrily, shall we live now,

Under the blossom that hangs from the bough."

[All join in chorus.]

All. Merrily, merrily, do we end now,
Merrily, merrily, make we our bow.

END OF CHARADE THE THIRD.

CHARADE THE FOURTH.
IN TWO SYLLABLES, AND THREE ACTS

ACT THE FIRST.

FIRST SYLLABLE.

CHARACTERS.

LANDLADY OF AN INN BY THE
SEASIDE.

SUSAN *chambermaid.*

BETTY *cook.*

TIMOTHY *waiter.*

ROMANTIC TRAVELLER

OVERTURE.—“*The Syren and Friar.*”

SCENE.—*Parlour of an Inn. Sideboard, with glasses decanters, &c. Small table, with inkstand and account, books.*

Enter SUSAN.

Susan. What a shame to make me rub these glasses all over again. I am sure they look bright enough. (*Takes up a glass and wipes it with a cloth she has in her hand.*) Let me see, I have been chambermaid now for just a week ; it is,

CHARADE.

certainly, more lively than a private house, but there is a good bit to do. (*Loud ring heard.*) My goodness, what a peal ! *[Exit hastily.*

Enter LANDLADY, with key basket in her hand. Seats herself by the table.

Land. Well, I have got a full house now. Oh, dear ! no one knows the cares and responsibilities that weigh down the shoulders of the landlady of an inn like this—charmingly situated by the sea side, and much frequented in summer time. Beds to let, good accommodation for man and horse. It is almost too much for a single woman. I think I shall be obliged to take a partner. There's that Timothy, who has been with me so long, and been such a good waiter, and always given such satisfaction, he thinks of nothing now but talking to the new chambermaid, and I am in agonies every day for fear my cook should give warning. I know they want her at "The Red Cow," but I am determined they shall not have her, even if I have to double her wages. (*Looks over the account books.*)

Enter SUSAN.

Susan. Oh ! if you please, ma'am, Number Eight is in such a passion, he declares there is a whole cart-load of cayenne pepper in his soup, and a sack of chilis. He says he is as near choked as he can be. He did cough and splutter so, ma'am, you've no idea, and he says he will have us all taken up in a bundle and carried before the magistrate for conspiracy.

CHARADE.

Land. O dear, O dear, unfortunate woman that I am ! I would not have had Number Eight offended for ever so much ; he pays so well, and now I dare say he will go over to "The Red Cow !" It must be cook's fault ; tell her to come here immediately. *[Exit CHAMBERMAID.*

Land. What can she have been thinking of? she knows Number Eight is so very particular.

Enter SUSAN.

Susan. Please, ma'am, cook says she is in the middle of a pudding, so she can't come.

Land. Am I mistress, or am I not? if she can't leave her pudding, she must bring it with her. *[Exit SUSAN.*

Land. Can't come, indeed! she is getting mighty independent. I see I must be master as well as mistress.

Enter COOK, with sleeves tucked up, marks of flour on her hands and arms, brown holland or large white apron. Has a pan and wooden spoon, with which she stirs vigorously all the time she is in the room.

Cook. Did you want me, ma'am?

Land. Yes, cook, I do. Number Eight is making great complaints about there being too much pepper in his soup.

Cook. *(Leaves off stirring in surprise.)* Too much pepper! well, I never!! what an insult!!! *(stirs again, quickly)* as if I did not always put the right quantities of everything into everything; my Mulligatawney soup, too, which has always been considered unapproachable by anybody.

Land. I should think so, if you make it too hot.

CHARADE.

Cook. (Indignantly.) Too hot, indeed! too good, more likely; if Number Eight can't eat Mulligatawny, he shouldn't order it. It was only yesterday that the India gentleman, in Number One, declared it was perfection, and I should think he ought to know; but it is of no consequence—I make no more soup in this house—I give warning—I go without warning—I leave this very night. Perhaps you'll get my wages ready, ma'am?

[Exit Cook, in a passion.]

Land. (Rising.) O dear! I must pacify her, or she will go to "The Red Cow." Don't stand staring there, Susan; haven't you got anything to do?

Susan. Shall I finish rubbing up these glasses, ma'am?

Land. Yes; and be quick about it. *[Exit LANDLADY.]*

Enter TIMOTHY, napkin in hand.

Tim. Ah! my charming Susy, you here! where is Missis?

Susan. Just gone into the kitchen, she'll be back directly.

[Cry of "Waiter" heard.]

Tim. (Aloud.) Yes, sir; coming, sir. *(In a lower tone)* Oh yes, I'm a coming, but not until I have rested my poor legs a bit, in Missis's easy-chair. *(Seats himself.)* It has been nothing but "Wai-ter," "Wai-ter," "Wai-ter," all day long; and there's Missis, just because the house is full of company—*(another cry of "Waiter" heard)*—yes, sir; coming, sir;—thinks she must be ordering me about, and it's—

[Sings. AIR.—"Figaro."]

CHORUS.

Timothy here, Timothy there,
Timothy what, Timothy where;
Timothy high, Timothy low,
Timothy come, Timothy go;
Thus, like a shuttlecock, struck to and fro,
Between Missis and customers flying I go.

Susan. And I think you had better go too, or Missis will come back and catch you here.

[*Cry of "Wai-ter" again heard.*

Timothy. (*Getting up lazily.*) Yes, sir; coming, sir. (*To SUSAN.*) Got a glass of sherry to give a fellow? Do, there's a dear.

Susan. Oh no, I dare not; it will be missed.

Timothy. No, it won't; fill it up with water. Here, I'll take the sherry—(*pours out a glass and drinks it off*)—and you put in the water. (*Cry of "Wai-ter," in an impatient tone.*) Oh, I'm a coming, coming, coming; I'm coming with the flowers. [*Runs out hastily.*

[*SUSAN puts some water into the sherry, and then appears to be busy with the glasses.*

Enter LANDLADY.

Land. Susan, don't you hear the blue-room bell ringing? (*Exit SUSAN. LANDLADY seats herself and appears to be making out a bill, speaking the items aloud.*) "One dinner, two teas, wax candles," &c., &c.

CHARADE.

Enter SUSAN.

Susan. Please, ma'am, the India gentleman, in Number One, wants a feather-bed.

Land. Hasn't he got one?

Susan. Yes, ma'am, he has got one to lay upon, but he wants another to put upon top.

Land. Well, Number One seems determined to take care of himself. I am sure I have given out no less than seven blankets for him already.

Susan. Yes, ma'am, but he says they must be made of oilcloth, he is so cold at night.

Land. And this is Midsummer Eve! Well, he may be able to bear it, but are we able to spare it? that is the question—every bed in the house is made up.

Susan. And I think we shall have another customer soon, ma'am; I saw a nice-looking gentleman walking past just now, with a knapsack on his back. I shouldn't wonder if he was to come for a night's lodging.

Land. And what business had you at the window, when there is so much to do?

Susan. I was only wiping some splashes off a pane of glass, ma'am.

Land. I dare say. Well, we must take him in and do for him if he does come. I would rather give up my own room than send a customer to "The Red Cow."

Enter WAITER.

Waiter. A gentleman, ma'am, wants to know if he can have a supper and bed here.

CHARADE.

Land. Certainly, ask him in. (*To SUSAN, quickly.*) Susan, is my cap straight?

Susan. Oh, yes, ma'am, beautiful.

Enter ROMANTIC TRAVELLER, with knapsack—removes his cap.

Tra. Good evening, ma'am, can I have supper and a bed here?

Land. (Curtseying.) Certainly, sir, as many suppers and as many beds as you please to order, sir. Will you take a seat? I have no other room disengaged at present.

Tra. Oh, thank you, I can make myself very comfortable here. (*Aside.*) What a pretty chambermaid!

Land. Susan, take the gentleman's knapsack. (*To TRAVELLER.*) You look tired, sir; take this easy-chair.

Tra. Oh, no, I could not think of depriving you of it, pray oblige me by resuming your seat—it is such a warm evening, I would rather be near the window. (*Seats himself by window.*) I am rather tired, I have been making a pedestrian tour through this beautiful part of the country, but, most unfortunately, have not met with one adventure.

Land. Are you fond of adventures, sir?

Tra. Yes, passionately fond; in fact, I left home on purpose to seek for some; by-the-by, I hope you have got a haunted room.

Land. (Hesitating.) Haunted room, sir—did you wish for one, sir?

Tra. I should be delighted.

Land. (To CHAMBERMAID.) We have got a haunted room, I think, Susan?

Susan. Oh, lor! ma'am, good gracious no, I hope not; I have heard people speak of one at "The Red Cow."

Land. (*Frowning and shaking her head.*) That will do, Susan, you can go. *[Exit CHAMBERMAID.]*

Land. (*To TRAVELLER.*) Of course we have got one, sir, and you shall sleep in it, sir; and I will tell you the whole tale about it, sir—rattling chains, apparitions, and all—as soon as you have ordered your supper, sir; what will you be pleased to have?

Tra. What have you got?

Land. Anything you please to order, sir.

Tra. Well, let me see, I should like some cold duck, and a Cambridge pudding.

Land. Cold duck—yes, sir—(*rings a bell—waiter appears*)—tell cook I want her.

Enter Cook.

Cook. Did you want me, ma'am?

Tra. (*Aside.*) What a nice-looking cook!

Land. We have plenty of cold duck in the house, I suppose, cook?

Cook. No, ma'am, not any at all—Number Two picked the last bone at dinner to-day.

Land. Dear me, I am very sorry, I have plenty alive; would you like to wait, sir, until one is killed, cooked, and cold?

Tra. No, certainly not; I am excessively hungry, I must have something else.

Land. Cook, can you make a Cambridge pudding?

CHARADE.

Cook. I should be very sorry, ma'am, if there was any pudding I couldn't make.

Tra. And I am sure from your hands it will be delicious—only mind and put in plenty of currants.

Cook. Currants, sir, in a Yorkshire pudding!

Tra. I said Cambridge.

Cook. Well, Cambridge or Yorkshire, it is all the same; you call it Cambridge and I call it Yorkshire.

Land. There, Cook, you can go—I see you know nothing at all about it.

Cook. Yes, I will go—to “The Red Cow.” [Exit.]

Tra. Eggs and ham I suppose you have got?

Land. Oh, yes, sir—some beautiful eggs, new laid the beginning of last week; and you never saw finer, fatter bacon!

Tra. Ah! that will do—and, in the mean time, I will take a glass of sherry. (*Helps himself.*)

Land. That sherry I can recommend, sir, as being very good; I keep it for my best customers.

Tra. (*Tastes it—looks rather doubtful—holds it up.*) Has it crossed the line?

Land. Oh, yes, sir, over it many times.

Tra. Ah! I thought it rather tasted of the water; but what a lovely night (*Looks out of window*); how beautifully the moon shines over the sea! I am so fond of the moonlight.

Land. Are you, sir? So am I.

Tra. “There is something about the moon’s ray

That is sweet unto you and to me.”

It is Midsummer Eve, the fairies ought to be abroad now.

Land. Ah ! that reminds me, sir, if you like romantic tales, I can tell you one about this place that people say is quite true.

Tra. Oh, pray tell me.

Land. They say that every Midsummer Eve, a lady all in white walks the seashore, singing in a voice of most ravishing sweetness, to entice the unwary traveller ; but woe to the unfortunate man who listens to her—he feels compelled to follow her, and she leads him, like a Will-o'-the-Wisp, to the water's edge, and he is sure to be drowned.

Tra. How very interesting ! I wish I could hear her to-night.

Land. Oh pray, sir, do not wish any such thing; you would be found a cold corpse, drowned by the morning.

Tra. (*Looking out.*) Hush ! do not you hear a sound of soft music ?

Land. Oh no, sir, it is only the sad sea-waves that you hear.

Tra. (*Excited.*) It is not ! it is the white lady. I see her ! she beckons to me, hush !

Land. (*Alarmed.*) Oh, pray, sir, don't listen.

Tra. Hush ! be quiet.

[*Voice heard singing from a little distance outside.*]

AIR.—“*Syren and Friar.*”

“ Come hither with me,
'Neath the bounding sea,
And merry and blythe
Our wedding shall be.

[*Repeat.*]

CHARADE.

Tra. I come, I come, I come.

Land. (*Seizing him by the arm.*) Oh, no, sir, pray don't go.
(*Calls.*) Timothy, Susan, cook—help—(*they rush in*)—hold him, don't let him go! (*They hold him by the coat—he makes vehement efforts to free himself.*)

(*Voice again.*) "Come hither with me."

Tra. I come, I come.

(*They all pull him back, crying out.*) No, no, no.

Voice. "'Neath the bounding sea."

Tra. I come, I come.

Omnes. Oh, pray, sir, don't go.

Voice. "Come hither, come hither, come hither with me."

Tra. I come, I come, I will come.

[*He breaks from them and rushes out. They all follow.*]

END OF ACT THE FIRST.

ACT THE SECOND.

SECOND SYLLABLE.

CHARACTERS.

COLONEL FIZZBALL. *commanding at Bilbury Fort.*

CORPORAL DICK.

MRS. COLONEL FIZZBALL.

KITTY *her maid.*

CHARADE.

COSTUME.

The Colonel must, of course, wear epaulettes, sash and sword—a cocked hat with a handsome plume cut in paper, has a good effect. The stripes down the trousers may easily be managed by tacking on a row of military braid. Moustache indispensable. The Corporal might be decorated with a Crimean medal. Mrs. Colonel Fizzball should appear in a hat and feathers of the latest fashion, and a scarf thrown over her dress.

OVERTURE.—“*The Campbells are coming.*”

SCENE.—*Supposed to be part of the exterior of Bilbury Fort. Some chairs turned upside down upon a table will make the battlements of a wall—surmounted by a large Union Jack.*

Enter CORPORAL, *with a telescope; seems to survey a considerable distance.*

Corp. The river's pretty clear, both up and down.
There seems a great commotion in the town.
We're ready for you, Mounseers; you'll be caught,
As sure as ever you come near this fine old Bilbury Fort.

[Sings; slowly pacing up and down.

AIR—“*Fine Old English Gentleman.*”

This fine old Bilbury Fort, my men,
One of the olden time.

CHARADE.

Enter COLONEL FIZZBALL. CORPORAL gives military salute.

Col. Well, Corporal, what news? You've kept a good look out?

Corp. Yes, sir, I don't see no suspicious, wicious, foreign craft about.

Col. The people fly from Graverstown, they're so extremely scared.

I think 'tis but a false alarm, but still, we'll be prepared.

Corp. They're well protected too, sir, I wonder at their fears;

When guarded right and left by their gallant Volunteers.

Col. Artillery and Rifle Corps—and opposite are we.

Between us both the French will wish they'd never put to sea.

Let no one pass without the word I whisper in your ear.

[*Whispers to CORP.*

Corp. I'll keep a strict and faithful watch; your honour need not fear.

[*COLONEL sings. AIR—"Death of Nelson."*

"England expects that every man this day will do his duty."

[*Exit COLONEL.*

[*CORPORAL takes another survey.*

Enter KITTY, with bundle and bandbox, seemingly in great trepidation.

Kitty. Oh! Corporal, good Corporal. Oh, pray do let me pass; I am so frightened, I must go, I cannot stay, alas!

CHARADE.

Corp. What ! Mrs. Colonel Fizzball's maid ! and all in such a flutter !

You look as if you'd quarrelled, Kitty, with your bread-and-butter.

Kitty. They say the French are coming,—

Corp. Well, and suppose they do.

You don't think they would meddle with a nobody like you !

Kitty. (*Indignantly.*) Nobody, sir, was somebody, sir, once to I know who.

Corp. Does your Lady know you're out ?

Kitty. Not unless she has been told.

Corp. (*Turning away.*) Go back and curl her hair.

Kitty. (*Reproachfully.*) You know she wears it rolled.

(*Trying to pass him.*)

Do let me go ; those dreadful guns look so extremely killing.

And I can get to London at the cost of just one shilling.

Corp. The fare is raised, my dear, to twopence more.

Kitty. What then, sir ? I can pay it—I'm not so very poor.

Corp. My orders are, let no one pass, unless they give the word.

Kitty. The word ! what is it ? Tell me ; for, indeed, I have not heard.

Corp. You'd best go quickly back ; the Colonel is severe.

He'll try you for deserting,—

Kitty. What shall I do ; O dear !

Good Corporal, remember this, you asked me once to marry,—

CHARADE.

Corp. And you said, "No, not I, indeed!" You thought to get young Harry.

Kitty. Well, let me go; I promise then, I really will — consider —

Corp. Too late for that, sweet Kitty, dear; I've wooed a charming widder,
With lots of tin, which is not tin, but bright and shining gold;
And so you see (in vulgar tongue) that you, Mam'selle, are sold.

[*Kitty makes a sudden dart to pass him, but he again stops her.*]

Kitty. You barbarous man, how would you like to see me die of fright?

I know I shall, unless, indeed, the Frenchmen kill me quite.

Corp. Oh, no, not quite, they're too polite, to kill my lady's treasure,

They'll treat you, p'raps, with half-and-half, of true Imperial measure.

(*Aside.*) That seems to shock her.

Kitty. You cruel, cruel mocker,

You know *you* treat me as you shouldn't ought,

I only wish that I could leave the Fort,

And never see your face again,

And never hear you speak,

[*Shrill whistle heard.*]

O dear, O dear, I've lost the train,

I hear the engine shriek.

CHARADE.

[*Takes up her things, hastily, a bonnet falls out of the box. CORPORAL catches it up.*

Corp. Hulloo—a prize,
Let's feast our eyes (*inspects it*).

Kitty. (*Trying to get it from him.*) Oh, my best bonnet!
How dare you put your hand upon it?

Corp. (*Holding it out of her reach.*)
A bonnet blue all round the border,
Very little out of order,
Scarcely has been worn.

(*To AUDIENCE*) Who bids for this becoming bonnet?
Pray some one put a price upon it,
(*Going, going, gone.*

[*Makes pretence of throwing it over the wall.*

Kitty. A pretty sentinel you are;
I'd make a better one by far,
I'd scorn to tease a woman then;
I'd keep my eyes and tongue for men.

Corp. Ha! here comes the Colonel, quick, march away.

[*Tosses her the bonnet.*

Kitty. (*Looking round.*) My lady too! Oh dear, what will she say?

[*Gathers up her things hastily and hides behind a projection.*

Enter COLONEL and MRS. FIZZBALL.

CHARADE.

Mrs. F. (To COLONEL.)

Now really is there need of all this fuss?
Has not Napoleon shaken hands with us?
Are we not friends? heed not the idle tale,
To fear a French invasion is so very stale.

Col. For anything, and everything, for nothing I am
ready.

For peace or war I live or die.

Mrs. F. My own, my gallant Teddy.

Colonel. (Sings.) "England expects that every man this day
will do his duty." Now, Corporal, give me the glass.

[CORPORAL hands it to him and retreats to a respectful
distance.

Mrs. F. Nay, dearest, give it me.

[Takes it from COLONEL.

I will mount guard and tell you when the enemy
I see.

Col. You'd better keep within, indeed, my love.

Mrs. F. Not I, I'm not afraid.

Corp. (Aside.) Rather a contrast here between the mistress
and the maid.

Mrs. F. I'm sure I have no cause for fear from such a
gallant nation.

Col. You'd strike the man who came near you.

Mrs. F. (Interrupting him astonished.) I'd strike him,
love?

Col. You'd strike him, love—with admiration!

Mrs. F. (Bows to the compliment.)

[COLONEL sings.

CHARADE.

AIR.—“ *My Mary Ann.*”

Glance those bright eyes o’er the water, love,
And tell me who is coming if you can ;
Be they here or there, not a man shall dare
To do harm or hurt to my Mary Ann.

Mrs. F. (Looking through the telescope.)

I see a steamer, and yacht, a fishing boat or two,
The river looks so calmly, deeply, beautifully blue ;
Ah ! now I see—

Col. What ! what !

Mrs. F. I see—a little smoke.

Col. (Gravely.) Those who mount guard in Bilbury Fort
are not allowed to joke.

Mrs. F. What’s that ! look there !

Col. and Corp. Oh where, where, where ?

[*Both look eagerly into the distance.*

*Mrs. F. I see them on their winding way,
About their sails the sunbeams play,
I see, a fleet !*

Col. and Corp. A fleet !! a fleet !!!

Mrs. F. (Turning round.) Why, Corporal, you’re white as
any sheet !

Corp. (Indignantly.) Excuse me, ma’am.

Col. Nonsense, my dear ; for courage he dont don’t lack.

*Mrs. F. I beg your pardon, Corporal Dick, I see you now
look black.*

[*COLONEL, in a state of excitement to CORPORAL, who is*

CHARADE.

so anxious to hear that he repeats the last word of every line after him, each taking a step nearer the door at the same time.

Col. Oh, then, if it's true (*Corp. repeats*) true,
The first thing to do (*Corp.*) do,
Is to see every man at his post (*Corp.*) post.
We will pepper them well (*Corp.*) well,
None shall go back to tell (*Corp.*) tell,
Unless it is somebody's ghost (*Corp.*) ghost.

[*Smothered scream from KITTY.*

[*COLONEL and CORPORAL are about to rush off when MRS. F. exclaims : Stay, stay, you are too quick, you did not let me finish ; I think, for men of war, these ships are rather thinnish ; look for yourself. (Gives the telescope to COLONEL, and tries to conceal a smile.)*

Col. (*taking a survey.*)

Well, Mrs. Colonel Fizzball, you have played a pretty trick.

A fleet indeed ! a fleet it is, but only *colliers*, Corporal Dick !

Colliers in plenty coming up, with sails all set.

Mrs. F. Coals instead of cannon, then I need not tremble yet !

Kitty (*emerges from her concealment.*)

Oh, pray, ma'am, do you think we're safe? Oh, won't you go away?

CHARADE.

Mrs. F. (Surprised.) What, Kitty! if you wish to leave me,
go,—within the Fort I stay;

A soldier's wife can own no fear, she scorns to run
away.

Kitty. And if I was a soldier's wife, should I? I almost
wish I was.

Corp. Then why did you refuse me, Kitty?

Kitty. Oh, why, because,

The widow—

Corp. Is all flummery—to my first love I'll stick,
If she will only promise to be Mrs. Corporal Dick.
[*Music heard at a distance, piano, a march, softly.*

Col. Hark, to the band! it's nine o'clock, your guard
shall be relieved,

And Kitty then can tell you if your vows can be
believed.

Mrs. F. And as our looked-for enemies so linger on their
way,

I vote we go to breakfast, with what appetite we
may.

[*COLONEL gives his arm to Mrs. F. The CORPORAL, in imitation, offers his to KITTY, and all exit to the sound of martial music.*

END OF ACT THE SECOND.

ACT THE THIRD.

THE WORD.

CHARACTERS.

LADY ARAMINTA DIAMONDEYES.

LADY CLARABELLA CHERRYLIPS *cousin to Araminta.*

COUNT FERDINAND *brother to Clarabella.*

ROBBER.

SPIRIT OF COMFORT.

COSTUME.

Ball-dress for the Ladies; officer's uniform for Lord Ferdinand, not forgetting moustache; the Robber must make himself look as ferocious as possible with the aid of a false, rough-looking beard, whiskers, and some black patches—he must carry pistols in his belt, also a dirk or dagger. The Spirit of Comfort should appear in floating white and rose-colour drapery—a gold circlet round the head, with a long veil of rose-colour tarletan over a white dress, has a good effect—gold wand in her hand.

OVERTURE.—“*Sunshine after Rain.*”

CHARADE.

SCENE.—*Prison in a robber's fortress.—(This may be managed by spreading a sheet over the carpet to represent a stone floor, a wooden bench and couple of stools or kitchen chairs; if the room is lit with gas, it should be turned very low until the Spirit of Comfort appears—then simultaneously with her appearance turned up to a brilliant light.)*

[*Enter LADY ARAMINTA DIAMONDEYES and LADY CLARABELLA CHERRYLLIPS, followed by ROBBER, carrying a lantern.*

Ara. (Clasping her hands.) Oh, what a desolate-looking place!

[*CLARABELLA clings to her, seemingly in great distress.*

Robber. Well, ladies, I hope you will make yourselves as comfortable as you can under the circumstances; our noble Captain will soon be here, and he will no doubt give you a better lodging.

Cla. (In despairing accents.) Your captain! Oh, what does he want with us? Good man, do have pity upon us!

Robber. Good man! come, that is rather rich; I don't think the priest would say that a bold freebooter like myself could possess much goodness, ha, ha!

Ara. The more reason you should do a good deed for once in your life. See, here—we will give you all our ornaments—(*begins to unfasten them*)—our brooches, our bracelets, our rings—we will give you them all, if you will only let us go before your dreadful Captain comes.

Rob. Ha, ha, bless your sweet innocence! do you really think we should wait for your gracious permission to enrich

CHARADE.

ourselves with all these pretty things—they shan't encumber you much longer, only we dare not touch them until the Captain comes; but you need not look so terrified—he won't murder you, or do you any harm, beyond (*here the following sentence is to be said in a very gallant manner, bowing, in supposed imitation of the CAPTAIN*) requesting you to grace his poor dwelling with your presence whilst he negotiates with your friends for a ransom worthy of your beauty and rank (*in his natural tone*); he's very polite to ladies, the Captain is. It is not very brilliantly lit here, so I'll leave this lantern. (*Sets it down, and leaves them—makes a noise of locking the door after him.*)

Cla. Oh, my dear Araminta, where are we? we must be a great distance from home—who could have dreamt of such a termination to my birthnight party, to which we had been looking forward with so much pleasure. I shall not live long, I am sure, if we are not soon rescued from the power of these wretches of robbers—I shall never dance again with Sir Augustus!

Ara. Who would have thought when we just walked to the end of the grove to look at the moon—

Cla. And to make our partners wonder at our disappearance.

Ara. Who would have thought that we should have been seized and forced into a close carriage?

Cla. Gags stuffed into our mouths to prevent us from screaming.

Ara. I should not be surprised if the shape of mine was spoiled for ever.

Cla. I wonder our dresses are not ruined!

CHARADE.

Ara. What a consternation our parents and all our friends will be in; they will call for us in vain. Echo alone will answer, "Where!"

Cla. They are now, no doubt, scouring the country in search of us.

[*The door suddenly opens—ROBBER puts his head in.*

Rob. No doubt they are, fair ladies; scouring it with sand-paper, to see if you are underground. (*Shuts the door again.*)

Cla. That wretch has been listening. Oh, I fear they will never find us—this dismal place must be underground, I think; see, there is no window, only a loophole, where the light comes in above our heads—not even a chimney that we might try to climb up.

Ara. And scarcely a bit of furniture. Ah! a thought strikes me—by standing on one of these stools we might reach the loophole and look out.

Cla. To be sure we might—you are the tallest, Araminta, you try.

[*They push the stool under the supposed loophole—ARAMINTA stands upon it, when the door again opens—ROBBER puts his head in—ARAMINTA jumps down.*

Rob. Pay for peeping, ladies—there are plenty of my jolly companions outside there, who would feel honoured by your notice. (*Shuts the door again.*)

Ara. Oh, good gracious, look at them indeed!

Cla. It is of no use, we are closely watched (*looks towards the door*) by that horrid, ugly, ill-mannered robber and spy,



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who listens to all we say—he will hear no good of himself though, that is one comfort. Do let us sit down, I feel quite faint—what shall we do?

[*They sit down, and CLARABELLA begins to cry.*

Ara. Pray, cheer up—there's a dear Clarabella, you have cried so much that your handkerchief is quite wet (*touching it*); so you must not cry any more, or you will have nothing to wipe your tears upon except your dress, and salt water, you know, will take the colour out.

Cla. Oh, dear Araminta, how can you jest when we are so miserable?

Ara. Certainly we are in a very uncomfortable plight, but I am too indignant to cry; and what is more, I am very hungry; I hope they do not mean to starve us.

Cla. Hark! I hear some one—that dreadful Captain has come home; I am sure if he looks ferocious I shall die with terror—cannot we hide somewhere?

[*Key turns in the lock—they both start up.*

Ara. Angels and ministers of grace defend us!

[*ROBBER enters with loaf of bread and pitcher of water.*

Rob. Well, my pretty birds, you need not flutter so, I have only brought you something to eat; we don't mean to starve you. (*Sets it down.*)

Ara. Has your Captain come? how far are we from home? Do tell us.

Rob. Ask no questions, and you'll be told no stories.

Cla. (*In a stately manner.*) Are you aware, sir, who we are? do you know who it is that you hold in such "durance vile?"

Rob. (*Bowing with much respect.*) I believe I have the extreme honour, intense gratification, and superabundant felicity, of speaking to the Lady Clarabella Cherrylips and the Lady Araminta Diamondeyes. I believe they reside, when at home, at the Castle near the Silver Lake, by the borders of the Golden Stream. You see I am quite familiar with your style and title, ladies.

Ara. (*Proudly.*) Rather too familiar, sir. Do you think this violence will pass unpunished? do you not fear the vengeance of our powerful friends?

Rob. Ha, ha! Oh yes; I do feel very much afraid, and I have no doubt the Captain will quite tremble. [*Exit.*]

Cla. What a rude man! He has never been accustomed to polite society, that is very plain; positively has brought us no glass to drink out of, and no knife to cut the bread with. Oh, I feel so faint; this place is so close.

Ara. (*In alarm.*) Oh pray, dear Clarabella, do not faint; remember I have no salvolatile here, no aromatic vinegar, not even a smelling bottle. Drink a little water, it will revive you. (*Holds her the pitcher. Clarabella drinks; her cousin does the same.*) Now eat a bit of bread, it will do you good.

[*Breaks some off the loaf, and offers a piece to Clarabella.*]

Cla. That dry stuff! I could not touch a morsel. What would I not give for the strawberry ice and almond cake that I refused from Sir Augustus, just before we took that fatal walk in the grove.

Ara. Let us walk up and down here, it will be better than sitting still. (*They walk up and down.*) Do keep up your spirits, there's a dear; you know our jailer robber said we

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should be better treated when his Captain came, so that will be one comfort.

Cla. Comfort! Ah, the only comfort for me would be a friendly voice. Do you think we shall ever hear one again?

Voice heard. Fear not—your deliverance is at hand!

[Both start and look round.]

Ara. I heard a voice; I am sure I did.

Cla. So did I; it said, "Fear not, your deliverance is at hand;" but I dare say it is only some trick of the robbers.

[SPIRIT OF COMFORT enters unperceived. The room suddenly becomes light.]

Ara. See how bright the room is. Can it be sunshine?

[They turn round and perceive the SPIRIT. Both exclaim. ARAMINTA is about to advance towards her, but CLARABELLA draws her back to the farther end of the room.]

Spirit. I come in answer to your wish; I know that you have need of me.

Cla. Oh, Araminta, what is it? I did not hear the door open, did you?

Ara. to SPIRIT. Who are you? what is your name? where do you come from? how did you come here?

Spirit. My name I shall leave you to find out. It is enough for me to say that I am a friend to all mortals who can see my face. I appear to mankind in different shapes. All wish for me, and some spend their lives in searching for me; some seek me in such a small thing as a glass of spirits.

Cla. It is a spirit. I thought so.

Spirit. Some see me in a blazing fire.

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Cla. In a blaze of fire ! It is an evil spirit come to delude us (*crossing herself*) ; pray do not speak to it—let us say some Ave Marias.

Ara. Nonsense, Clarabella ; more likely a good fairy come to help us. I feel better already ; do not you ?

Cla. Well, I don't feel any worse.

Spirit. Believe what I say. Your friends are at hand, and you will soon be delivered from the power of the robbers.

[*Disappears.*

Ara. She's gone, and I, for one, believe every word. Our friends are near ; we shall soon be at home, and then we shall be able to laugh at this adventure. What a tale we shall have to tell !

Cla. Now I have had a crumb of comfort, I think I could eat a crust. [*Breaks a piece off the loaf.*

Ara. The place does not look half so dismal now. Let us imagine it a drawing-room, this bench a couch, and these stools ottomans ; and you and I are waiting to receive our friends.

Cla. I really feel quite light-hearted now.

Ara. And I feel quite light-footed also. [*Sings.*

AIR.—“ *Buffalo Girls.*”

Oh, would you like to have a dance,
A waltz or polka new from France,
Say, will you dance with me.

[*They dance the Polka, both singing.*

Oh yes, oh yes, we are going out to-night,
Oh yes, oh yes, we are going out to-night,
So we'll dance in this dismal room.

[*Door flies open. Robber appears.*

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Rob. Ah, my birds singing! I am glad they are so happy.

[*Great noise heard outside. A voice exclaims, "Hurrah! here they are! hurrah!" ROBBER rushes out, leaving the door open behind him.*

Ara. Oh, look! there is your brother Ferdinand, and a hundred men.

Cla. The robbers are prisoners; we are saved! we are saved!

Rob. (*Frantically rushing in again.*) Entrapped! entrapped!

Enter COUNT FERDINAND.

Fer. Yes, if these ladies are birds in a cage, you are caught like rats in a trap. Your Captain is in our hands, and the place is entirely surrounded by my soldiers.

[*ROBBER draws out a pistol, and points it at FERDINAND. ARAMINTA and CLARABELLA scream.*

Fer. Fire, and you are a dead man! Yield, and if I find that these ladies have sustained no injury, I promise you your life.

Rob. I yield; if the Captain is taken prisoner, resistance is useless.

Fer. (*Calls out.*) Here, Augustus, Percy, secure this man; treat him gently, but mind he does not escape.

[*Exit ROBBER.*

Fer. Oh, my dear sister, my dear cousin, how delighted I am to find you safe. (*Embraces his sister and kisses his cousin's hand.*) Are you quite unharmed?

Both. Oh yes, quite, only frightened; do let us go now.

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Cla. We will tell you all about it when we are away from this horrid place.

Ara. But our friend, who came to comfort us, I wish she would appear once more.

Fer. What, did you find a friend here? a daughter perhaps, of one of the robbers.

Cla. Oh no, she was a fairy, or a good spirit or something of that kind, but she would not tell us her name.

Fer. Oh, I dare say it will soon be found out.

Ara. to Cla. Let us ask her to come and live with us.

[*Both sing*

AIR.—“*Come dwell with me.*”

Come dwell, come dwell with me,
And your home shall be
A castle grand, just like fairy-land,
With a distant view of the changing sea.
Our castle is a magic scene,
The woods and groves seem evergreen,
The streamlet, as it flows along,
Seems murmuring a fairy song,
Come dwell with me, &c., &c.

[*Whilst they are singing the SPIRIT OF COMFORT appears between them. They form a tableau, FERDINAND standing on one side, and the ROBBER, who makes his appearance again, on the other. All bow to the audience.*

END OF CHARADE THE FOURTH.

CHARADE THE FIFTH.
IN TWO SYLLABLES AND THREE ACTS.
ACT THE FIRST.

FIRST SYLLABLE.

CHARACTERS.

LADY MIGNONETTE . . heiress of Evergreen Castle.
VIOLET her maid and foster-sister.
SIR NUTMEG GERANIUM *ex-guardian to Lady Mignonette*
(an elderly gentleman addicted
to snuff).
CAPTAIN LARKSPUR . . nephew to Sir Nutmeg Geranium,
and suitor for the hand of Lady
Mignonette.

OVERTURE.—“*The power of love.*”

SCENE.—*A drawing-room in Evergreen Castle.*

Enter LADY MIGNONETTE.

Lady M. (Thoughtfully.) “Beautiful! my dear fellow, she is plain,—decidedly plain! her only beauty lies in her possessions.”—Yes, those were the words plain enough; they have haunted me ever since. The speaker was Captain Larkspur,—the person he addressed, Sir Clove Pink; of that I am quite sure—but did they refer to me?—In my own mind I feel an irresistible conviction that it was myself whose personal appearance Captain Larkspur was pleased to comment upon so plainly last night,—and if so, he cannot love

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me, as he has almost made me believe he does. (*Looks at herself in the glass.*) I know that I am not beautiful,—my forehead is not alabaster, my eyes are neither stars nor diamonds, my lips are not twin rosebuds, neither are my features finely chiselled,—but still, I did not think I was absolutely and decidedly plain. (*Turns away.*) Never mind,—it seems such a relief to have a good excuse for rejecting him, that I find it is only my pride and vanity that are wounded; my heart is still my own, if I have got one, which I almost begin to doubt. [*Claps her hands.*]

Enter VIOLET.

Vio. Yes, my lady.

Lady M. Fetch my hat and scarf, Violet; I am going to walk in the rose-garden.

Vio. Yes, my lady.

[*Exit.*]

Lady M. And yet, methinks, I could love—

If I my ideal realized could see—

My standard reached, though lofty it may be.

I sometimes dream of that mysterious sympathy between two souls, which is called love.

I dream that I have found my kindred soul,

That on the earth no more I walk alone;

I seem enwrapped in happiness, so great,

So pure, so strong, that naught can harm me then.

Cares and vexations fly, and I behold

The op'ning vista of my future life

Streaming with sunshine—

Enter VIOLET, with hat and scarf, and a bouquet of flowers in her hand.

Vio. Yes, my lady, the sun is indeed shining brightly; a walk will do you good—you are not looking at all well to-day.

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Lady M. (Sighing.) Am I not? (*Slowly puts on the hat and scarf.*) Ah, Violet! be thankful that you are not an heiress, that you are my foster-sister, my faithful Violet, instead of being the Lady Mignonette, mistress of Evergreen Castle, and all its broad domains.

Vio. Why, dear lady,—are you not happy?

Lady M. I am not unhappy, but I am teased and worried;—you know that ever since I came of age, my guardian has been impressing upon me the necessity of marriage;—he says that these large estates ought to have a master, that women cannot understand business, and that I shall be cheated and plundered in all directions.

Vio. Oh dear, my lady, I hope not; but does not your ladyship think Captain Larkspur a fine, handsome gentleman?—

Lady M. (Impatiently.) Oh yes, he is handsome enough, no one can call him plain. Violet, you have been brought up with me, and I believe you love me.

Vio. Indeed I do, dear lady, with all my heart.

Lady M. Well then, tell me honestly, truly, what you think of me, of my personal appearance; I mean my face, for instance.

Vio. (Surprised.) Indeed, my lady, I think you are very nice-looking indeed; and quite lovely in the blue satin and pearls, that your ladyship wore last night.

Lady M. Ah, Violet! Fine feathers make fine birds; but still, the birds themselves are just as good without such fine adornments, who sings so sweetly as that little brownie the nightingale?

Vio. To be sure, my lady, and what is nicer than a fowl plucked and roasted? It is a great deal more use than, than stalking about a farmyard; the proof of the pudding is in the eating, as cook often says.

Lady M. (Laughing.) Good gracious, Violet, I am not going to marry a cannibal, I hope.

Vio. What is cannibal, my lady?

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Lady M. Never mind, I will tell you some other time.

[*Is about to leave the room.*]

Vio. But, my lady, this bouquet, that Captain Larkspur left this morning.

Lady M. (Coldly.) Well, what of it?

Vio. Shall I put it in water? The flowers are getting quite dead.

Lady M. As you like, I do not care. [Exit.]

Vio. (Putting the flowers in a vase.) I wonder what is the matter with my lady to-day? she seems offended with Captain Larkspur about something, she wouldn't see him this morning; however, he said he should come again in the evening, so perhaps they will make it up. I am sure he is a very liberal gentleman, to give me this bright gold piece (*Exhibits a sovereign*); he cannot be in want of money.

Enter SIR NUTMEG GERANIUM. VIOLET turning round, suddenly perceives him, and drops a curtsy.

Vio. Oh dear, Sir Nutmeg Geranium! I beg your pardon, sir, I did not hear you come in.

Sir N. G. Where is your mistress, the Lady Mignonette?

Vio. Walking in the rose-garden, sir. I will go directly and tell her that you are here. [Exit.]

Sir N. G. (Seating himself.) Well, I must try what I can do for this scamp of a nephew of mine, or I shall never be free from him; actually to have the impudence to ask me to pay his debts for the third time! No, no; I will not do it; he must marry the heiress, that will be the best thing both for him and me. Now, I must be cautious though; if I appear to influence her, she will suspect some interested motive; the matter requires a little diplomacy,—but however, I hope I have not been ambassador at the court of King Gammon for nothing.

[Takes a pinch of snuff.]

Enter LADY MIGNONETTE.

Lady M. My dear guardian, I am delighted to see you.

Sir N. G. My dear ward, or rather I should say, my late ward, I am charmed to see you; but why do you look so pale, are there so few roses in the garden, that you must needs leave yours there?

Lady M. I was at a soirée last night given by the Countess Camelia in honour of the King of the Cactū, who is over in this country for a short time; the excitement and not having my usual rest, may account for my looking pale, but I am quite well.

Sir N. G. (Shaking his head.) Ah, my dear late ward, I see how it is! You are beginning to find the truth of what I told you. You want some one to take care of you, and to relieve you from the management of this large estate; the responsibility is too much for you, my dear late ward, I was sure it would be so.

Lady M. But, my dear Sir Nutmeg, I have every confidence in my bailiff.

Sir N. G. (Shaking his head.) But I have not, Lady Mignonette, I have not; at present, I have no proofs, but I hope to be able to produce them before long. I shall always feel an interest in my dear late ward, and if my suspicions are correct, why—
[Takes a pinch of snuff.]

Lady M. My dear guardian, you quite alarm me.

Sir N. G. There is no need to be alarmed just at present; mind, I do not say your bailiff is not worthy of confidence; merely that I have no confidence in him. I am sorry you have such an objection to matrimony, it would be a good way of releasing yourself from your difficulties; a woman is so easily imposed upon in business matters. (Takes another pinch of snuff.) I hear you have refused his Grace Duke Dandelion and Major Convolvulus.

Lady M. You have heard no more than the truth, but

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they cannot either of them say that I gave them encouragement; the Duke is a pompous nonentity, and as for Major Convolvulus, I quite dislike him; his sanguinary tales of battles make me shudder.

Sir N. G. Ah! just so! But that objection cannot apply to a poor young fellow I know, who is desperately in love with your icy ladyship; for, although in the army, he has never been in active service, merely entered the Blues to keep away the blues in fact. Poor fellow; I was once in love myself, so I know what it is. [*Takes more snuff.*]

Lady M. You allude to your nephew, Captain Larkspur?

Sir N. G. Well, yes; I did allude to him, but almost involuntarily, as I may say; for, my dear late ward, I would not wish for a moment that the opinion of your former guardian should have any weight with you in such an important matter. You are of age, and perfectly able to judge for yourself; you, my dear late ward and my poor nephew, are the two beings in whose happiness I should most rejoice; if that happiness could be secured by your union, I should be pleased, but if you would both be more happy apart, I should be equally pleased—(*rising*)—and now, with your permission, I will go and take a look at the grounds.

Lady M. Do so, Sir Nutmeg, and I will join you presently.

[*Exit SIR NUTMEG GERANIUM.*]

Lady M. There he goes, to find fault with everything, and then say it is because I cannot look after things. Oh dear, Oh dear, I wish I had never come of age. "Her only beauty lies in her possessions." I cannot get those words out of my head—did he speak of me?—how can I arrive at the truth? (*Walks up and down in an agitated manner.*) Ah! a thought!—I have it—it is worth a trial at least. (*Claps her hands.*) Violet, Violet, come here instantly.

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Enter VIOLET.

Lady M. Violet, go upstairs to the lumber-room, and in the further corner on the right hand, you will see an old-fashioned easy-chair, with a carved back; have it carefully dusted and brought into this room as quickly as possible.

Vio. Yes, my lady. *[Exit.]*

Lady M. Now, if there is any truth in the old legend belonging to that chair, by its means I shall be able to find out what I wish so much to know. I remember well the tale runs thus: Whoever sits in the chair is compelled to speak the truth, the whole truth, the plain truth, and nothing but the truth, so long as he remains seated in it. He thinks he is saying what he intends to say, but if that is not true, he quite unknowingly speaks exactly what he thinks instead. It will be capital. I will certainly try it. *[Exit.]*

Enter VIOLET, pushing before her a large chair.

Vio. Now what, in the name of all that is wonderful, can my lady want with this old-fashioned piece of goods out of the lumber-room? I am sure it does not agree with the other furniture of the drawing-room. Let me see how it feels. (*Sits herself in it.*) Remarkably comfortable, I must say. (*Suddenly jumps up in a frightened manner, and retreats to the other end of the room.*) Oh, my goodness! I have just thought of something; suppose—only suppose—it should be the Chair of Truth! I know there is such a thing in the family, because I have often heard my mother, who was my lady's nurse, talk about it.

Enter LADY MIGNONETTE.

Lady M. Ah! that is right; you have got the chair down.

Vio. Yes, my lady, but it was as much as Jonquil and Narcissus could both do to lift it—it is so heavy; it does not

look very bright, but I told Polyanthus she must not spend much time in rubbing it, as your ladyship wanted it directly. Shall I push it back in the corner?

Lady M. No, not in the corner; just there by the table. (*VIOLET pushes it.*) Yes, that will do very well; now sit down in it, that I may see how it looks when filled.

Vio. (Alarmed.) Oh dear no, my lady, I could not think of sitting in an easy-chair in your ladyship's presence; indeed, I could not think of such a thing for a minute.

Lady M. I do not require you to think of it, I wish you to do what I ask; I will not say command.

[*VIOLET, with manifest reluctance, seats herself for a moment, tightly compressing her lips, and then jumps up again.*]

Vio. Will that do, my lady?

Lady M. No, sit down again, and sit still until I tell you to rise; what are you afraid of?

Vio. Indeed, my lady, I hardly know; I hope I always speak the truth, but it is not always convenient or always right to speak the whole truth, is it, my lady? It is better sometimes to hold one's tongue; besides, it is such a thing not to know what one is saying.

Lady M. Ah, I see you suspect the same as I do, that this is the wonderful Chair of Truth, about which we both heard so many tales in our childhood; but fear not, I can trust you in the chair, and I promise I will only ask one question.

[*VIOLET seats herself in the chair with the air of a martyr.*]

Lady M. Now, Violet, tell me, do you think me plain?

Vio. No, indeed, my lady; I think you are rather nice-looking than otherwise, and as dear and as good a lady as ever lived.

Lady M. (Smiling.) That will do, Violet, you may rise.

Vio. (Jumping up.) Oh, dear lady, what did I say? Believe me, I meant to say you were very nice-looking indeed.

Lady M. I am quite satisfied, Violet, so you may be satisfied too; it is to be hoped that somebody else may come off as well. Hark! what is that?

Vio. It sounds like Captain Larkspur's guitar; doesn't your ladyship think he sings beautifully?

Lady M. He sings well, but his voice is rather too effeminate—not sufficiently manly in its tone. I suppose he is going to favour me with a serenade. Sit here, Violet, on this ottoman, and we will listen to it.

[*VIOLET sits at the feet of her mistress. Here the piano can do duty for the guitar. A voice heard singing—*

“Come into the garden, Maud,
The black bat night hath flown;
Come into the garden, Maud,
I am here at the gate alone.”

Changes to “Leonora.”

“Oh I have sighed to rest me,
Yet all in vain I cry,
Mignonette, my Mignonette.”

Changes to “Nancy Till.”

“Come, love, come,
The boat we'll row;
It lies high and dry
On the stream below.”

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"Open the window, love, Oh do,
And listen to the music I'm playing for you;
The whispering of love so soft and low,
Like unto the streamlet's murmuring flow."
Come, love, &c.

Changes again to "Come into the garden, Maud."

Lady M. Why, he is like the organ-grinders, plays out his set of tunes and then begins again. Instead of complying with his entreaties to go into the garden, I think I will invite him to come out of it. You may go, Violet, and say that I will see him. (*Exit VIOLET.*) Now for the trial.

Enter CAPTAIN LARKSPUR.

Cap. L. Fairest and most charming of ladies, have I indeed the felicity of seeing you again? you were denied to me this morning, and since then the hours have dragged, oh, so wearily by.

Lady M. I was not very well, Captain Larkspur; will you be seated?

Cap. L. (*Dropping upon one knee.*) Not until I have expressed to you my adoration, my—my boundless love, sweet Mignonette; will you not believe that I love you? Oh, say you will be mine!

Lady M. If you will seat yourself in that chair, Captain Larkspur (*waves her hand to the Chair of Truth*), I will believe all that you say; in your present posture, I will listen to nothing.

Cap. L. I obey. (*Seats himself.*) Will you not believe how I long to call this noble castle mine. (*Starts up.*) Yes, fairest creature, how I long to call you mine.

Lady M. Resume your seat, sir. (*Captain resumes his seat.*) Do you really love me?

Cap. L. I love your wealth, your broad lands, these are

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what I love; for yourself, I care not at all. (*Starts up.*) Yes, I repeat it—it is yourself that I love; for your wealth and broad lands I care not at all.

[*LADY M. waves him back, and he again takes his seat in the truth-telling chair.*

Lady M. Do you really think me beautiful?

Cap. L. (Emphatically.) Beautiful! no, indeed! you are plain; yes, plain, decidedly plain; not for a moment to be compared with the sweet Lady Rose, whom, if she were but rich, I would marry to-morrow. (*Rises.*) Yes, you are not only beautiful, but charming, most charming, and your qualities surpass your charms. Why, even the Lady Rose, who is called the Queen of Beauty, cannot compare with you in my eyes.

Lady M. (Rising.) Enough, Captain Larkspur; you must think I can believe any amount of flattery, but I will now tell you my final determination. It is at length perfectly plain to me that it is my possessions you desire, and not myself. I accidentally overheard a remark you made to Sir Clove Pink yesterday evening, which let me into the secret; you therefore will not be surprised to hear that I decidedly and irrevocably decline the honour of your alliance, and wish you a very good evening. [*Exit LADY MIGNONETTE.*

[*CAPTAIN LARKSPUR stands for a moment astounded, and then bursts into a violent passion.*

Cap. L. What! rejected! rejected!! the golden prize escaped me when I thought it nearly within my grasp! What did I say to Sir Clove Pink? I am sure I cannot remember. How am I to pay my debts now? debts of honour, too, that must be paid! (*Catches sight of the bouquet.*) Ah! my flowers! (*Seizes them and dashes them violently on the floor.*) What did she accept them for if she did not mean to accept me?

Enter SIR NUTMEG GERANIUM.

Sir N. G. Nephew, nephew, what is all this disturbance about? are you mad?

Cap. L. Very nearly; your charming ward has rejected me, do you hear? rejected me!

Sir N. G. Well, I cannot help it, I have done all I could for you; it must have been your own fault.

Cap. L. Ah, my good uncle, you can talk very calmly, but for me, all is lost now; there is nothing left for me but to blow—

Sir N. G. (Interrupting him.) Not your brains—don't talk of blowing your brains out, it makes me nervous. (*Takes a pinch of snuff.*) Take it coolly and try some one else; there are more rich heiresses than one in the world.

Cap. L. Ah, that is good advice. Now, if the Lady Rose were but an heiress, I am sure she would not refuse me; but alas, she is only one of an enormously large family. I must not think of her, so for the present I'll only blow a cloud, and drown—yes, I'll drown my sorrows in the bowl.

[*Rushes out, followed by* SIR NUTMEG GERANIUM.]

END OF ACT THE FIRST.

ACT THE SECOND.

SECOND SYLLABLE.

CHARACTERS.

JEANNOT *a workman.*
JEANNETTE *his wife.*
HENRI }
LOUIS } *two friends.*

OVERTURE.—“*We have lived and loved together.*”

SCENE.—*Interior of a cottage—a wooden table and chairs, a row of plates on a table against the wall, to represent a dresser, two saucepans on the fire.*

Enter JEANNETTE.

Jeannette. Well, now I have put the children to bed, I must see about supper: my good man will be hungry when he comes home. (*Uncovers one of the saucepans.*) Ah! this stew is getting on nicely (*uncovers the other saucepan*), and the potatoes are nearly done. My husband says I am the only woman of his acquaintance who knows how to boil a potato properly, so I must keep up my character. I shall have a nice little supper ready, that cannot fail to please him. (*Takes a spoon from the dresser and stirs the stew, singing at the same time.*)

“There is nae luck about the house,
There is nae luck at a’;
There is nae pleasure in the house
When my gude man’s awa.”

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Enter JEANNOT.

Jeannot. Well, wife, here I am ; is supper ready ? I smell something good. I am very tired—I have had a hard day's work. (*Throws himself into a chair.*)

Jeannette. Yes, it will be ready by the time I have laid the cloth ; something very nice indeed.

Jeannot. Ah ! then just reach me my pipe, a smoke will give me an appetite. (*Wife reaches his pipe from the mantleshef, hands it to him and appears to light it ; he forthwith proceeds to puff out clouds of imaginary smoke ; wife bustles about and lays the cloth.*)

Jeannette. Well, Jeannot, what news have you brought home this evening ?

Jeannot. News ! Ah ! (*puff*) there is news, indeed—news that will astonish everybody, and make them mind their P's and Q's. (*Puff.*)

Jeannette. Whatever can it be ? Make haste and tell me.

Jeannot. Ah ! curious, of course ; just like a woman (*puff*) ; let us have supper, and then I will tell you all about it.

[*Wife puts some of the contents of each saucepan on a couple of plates, and they both sit down to supper.*

Jeannette. Now then, what is the news ?

Jeannot. The Emperor has issued a proclamation.

Jeannette. Oh dear ! I hope he is not going to war.

Jeannot. No, quite the contrary. Look here !

[*Pulls out of his pocket a handbill, at the head of which, in large letters, are these words :*

“L'EMPIRE C'EST LA PAIX!!!”

Jeannette. (*Reads.*) The empire is peace ! Well, that is all right, but what is it all about ?

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Jeannot. Listen, and I will read it to you. (*Reads.*)

“The Emperor to his loving subjects, greeting :

“Whereas the Emperor, being at peace with all the world, is extremely desirous that all his loving subjects should be at peace with one another; he therefore enacts that from this day forth, all persons found or heard quarrelling, either by word or deed, shall be guilty of misdemeanour, and liable to a fine of five francs, or imprisonment until the fine is paid !”

There, wife, what do you think of that ?

Jeannette. Well, I never heard such a thing in all my life ! People may well say this is not a free country, if we are not to be allowed the free use of our tongues ; but there is one thing, people don't very often quarrel publicly.

Jeannot. No ; but don't you see, if any ill-natured person has a spite against his neighbour, and hears him have a few words with any one—his wife, for instance—it will be very easy for him to inform against him, and have him taken before the magistrate ; besides, there will be plenty of spies about, you may depend.

Jeannette. Well, there's one comfort, he won't get any fines out of us, we never quarrel, do we, *Jeannot* ?

Jeannot. Oh, no, we only have a little tiff now and then ; but that is nothing to speak of, merely the spice in the sweet cake of matrimony. And now I will have some more stew and another potato. (*Throws himself back in his chair.*) Where does that wind come from ? (*Looks round.*) Why, the door is open ! Do go and shut it, before I get the rheumatics.

Jeannette. I think you might have shut it after you when you came in.

Jeannot. Ah ! but you see I didn't ; so just go and shut it now, will you ?

Jeannette. Don't you see I have got the saucepan in my hand? I think you may just as well shut it as me, and better too.

Jeannot. (*Assuming an easy attitude.*) I require to rest myself, and not to be jumping up and down for this and that and the other. I have had a hard day's work, remember, while you have been at home all day.

Jeannette. And have not I had a hard day's work, too? That's just like you men, because our duties lay at home, you think that we have nothing to do. Have I not had the floors to scrub, clothes to wash, water to draw from the well, meals to cook, and your buttons to sew on, besides the children to attend to all day; and had only just finished putting them to bed when you came in.

Jeannot. Will—you—go—and shut the door?

Jeannette. No. [*Sits down and goes on with her supper.*]

Jeannot. You won't, eh? Perhaps you don't remember, in the marriage service, that it says you are to "obey" me?

Jeannette. I don't remember, in the marriage service, that it says you are to "command" me.

Jeannot. Suppose I say that you *shall* shut the door?

Jeannette. Then I shall say that I *shan't*.

Jeannot. Come,—this is very pretty, very pretty indeed,—that's you that never quarrel! Remember, the door being open, every one that goes by can hear; and I can't afford to be fined for quarrelling.

Jeannette. Why don't you go and shut it then?

Jeannot. (*Thumping his fist upon the table.*) No, I am determined I won't, not if it is open all night.

Jeannette. And I am equally determined. I can be quite as firm as you—but I shall be very sorry to quarrel, or even to have a tiff about it. I am not fond of spice myself,—so, to prevent any more words, I think we had better agree that the first one who speaks after the clock has struck eight, —set up and shut the door. It is just on the strike now
 you agree?

CHARADE.

Jeannot. Well, yes, I have no objection to make an agreement of that kind. I know very well, who will have to shut the door though, after all ; it is impossible for a woman to keep silence for long together.

Jeannette. That we shall see. Hark ! [*Clock strikes eight.*

[*JEANNOT refills his pipe, settles himself in his chair, puts his feet on the fender, and appears to enjoy his pipe.*

JEANNETTE begins to clear away the supper.

1st Voice. (*Heard outside.*) I say, Henri, we shall get drenched through with this rain ; there is a light in this cottage, let us ask for shelter.

2nd Voice. With all my heart, Louis ; a shower-bath in one's clothes is not particularly pleasant.

[*A knock heard at the door ; JEANNOT half rises, takes his pipe from his mouth, then suddenly remembers himself, and sits down again. JEANNETTE takes no notice at all.* [*Knocking repeated.*

1st Voice. Are these people deaf ? The door is not fastened, I feel inclined to walk in without waiting for an invitation. What say you, Henri ?

2nd Voice. It is very incomprehensible ; I can see plainly the figure of a man sitting before the fire, perhaps he is asleep. Knock again. [*Knocking heard again, louder than before.*

1st Voice. There, I should think that is loud enough to wake the Seven Sleepers.

[*While this is going on, JEANNOT makes various signs to his wife to go to the door, but she busies herself with her plates and dishes, and pays no attention.*

CHARADE.

2nd Voice. Oh, I say, I am not going to stand this; I can see a woman moving about inside, let us go in. [*They push the door open and enter, politely taking off their caps.*]

Louis to JEANNETTE. Madam, we must beg you to pardon this intrusion; we wished to ask for shelter from the rain, and have knocked at your door several times, but have not been so happy as to obtain an answer. •

[JEANNETTE *offers them some chairs, but does not speak.*

JEANNOT *draws back from the fire, to allow them room, and then resumes his pipe.*

Henri. And it does not seem that you get any answer now. Surely this cannot be a deaf and dumb couple; such a pretty woman too; what a pity!

Louis. Ah! she blushes. The woman is not deaf at any rate.

Henri. Neither is the man. See how angrily he looks at us; he knows quite well all that we are saying.

Louis. How strange, then, that [they should neither of them come to the door when we knocked. (*To JEANNOT.*) My good man, have you the misfortune to be dumb? (*JEANNOT shakes his head.*)

Henri. Then why in the world don't you speak, man? What a mysterious adventure!

[JEANNETTE *puts clean plates upon the table, and by signs invites them to eat of the contents of her saucepans.*

Louis. Madam, we are extremely obliged to you; but if you would give us a little tongue, instead, just by way of a relish, we should prefer it, and esteem it as a favour.

[JEANNETTE *can hardly forbear smiling, seats herself at a little distance, and takes up some sewing.*

CHARADE.

Henri. As for me, the appetite that I want satisfied is curiosity. I should like to find out this mystery;—of course, if they are really dumb, there is no mystery in the case; but I cannot think they are. (To JEANNOT.) Now, my good man, do tell me, are you dumb? you need only say "Yes," and then I shall be satisfied.

[JEANNOT *shakes his head impatiently.*

Henri. Is your wife dumb? [*Another shake of the head.*

Louis. Perhaps they have committed some peccadillo, and their priest has ordered them not to speak for a certain time, as a penance.

Henri. We may think all manner of things, and not hit upon the right; however, people that can speak, and won't speak, must be made to speak.

Louis. That does not seem in your power, or mine either, I think.

Henri. We will see that: what will you bet that I do not make this surly fellow speak within the next two minutes?

[JEANNOT *looks at them defiantly.*

Louis. A dozen of champagne.

Henri. Done. Take out your watch, while I make the attempt.

[JEANNETTE *looks rather alarmed; LOUIS takes out his watch.*

Henri. First, before I begin, I mean to have a kiss from his nice little wife.

[*Advances towards her; JEANNOT springs up, dashes down his pipe, and pushes him violently on one side, nearly sending him over, exclaiming,*

CHARADE.

Jeannot. You'll kiss my wife, will you? How dare you talk of kissing my wife? Leave the house immediately, before I turn you out!

Henri. (Laughing.) Bravo,—bravo you, bravo myself! I have fairly won, have I not, Louis?

Louis. (Laughing, and returning his watch to his pocket.) Yes—fairly won, within the time. I must acknowledge myself your debtor to the tune of a dozen of champagne.

Jeannette. (Triumphantly.) And you must shut the door, Jeannot.

Henri. Why, it seems that I have not only made the husband speak, but the wife too; that was not in the wager. *(To JEANNETTE.)* Madam, I must beg you to believe that I had no intention of taking what I do not value, unless it is voluntarily given; you heard our wager,—I thought that if anything could make a man speak against his will, it would be an attempt to insult his wife—therefore I hope you will pardon my apparent rudeness.

Jeannette. Willingly, sir.

Henri. (To JEANNOT.) Are you satisfied?

Jeannot. Oh yes—we were very foolish; were we not, Jeannette?

Louis. Oh, I begin to see, now. They have had a quarrel. I say, my good friends, don't you know there is a proclamation out about quarrelling?

Jeannette and Jeannot together, alarmed. Oh no, indeed, sir, we have not had a quarrel.

Louis and Henri. What then? You may as well tell us.

CHARADE.

JEANNETTE *sings.* AIR—"Nothing more."

"We neither of us liked to rise
To go and shut the door,—

Jeannot. "We quarrelled not, but only had
A tiff, and nothing more."

Both together repeat.

"We quarrelled not, but only had
A tiff, and nothing more.

Henri (To LOUIS.) *Sings—*

"It seems that they would shut their mouths,
But would not shut the door.

Louis (To HENRI.)

"They quarrelled not, but only had

All four in chorus.

"A tiff, and nothing more."

END OF ACT THE SECOND.

ACT THE THIRD.

THE WORD.

CHARACTERS.

MRS. AUGUSTUS SPENCER MONT-

GOMERY JONES *Plaintiff in an action for
breach of Promise of
Carriage.*

MR. AUGUSTUS SPENCER MONT-

GOMERY JONES *her husband—defendant.*

CHIEF JUSTICE SCALES *judge.*

SERGEANT CLAPPER *counsel for plaintiff.*

SERGEANT TURNTWIST *counsel for defendant.*

THE JURY *composed of gentlemen
selected from the audi-
ence.*

JULIA RIBBONS *witness for plaintiff.*

MR. FRANK DASHAWAY *witness for defendant.*

CLERK OF THE COURT.

OVERTURE.—“*The Wedding March.*”

SCENE.—*Court of Justice—Judge, jury, barristers, and clerk,
seated—the Judge has a table before him, and takes notes*

during the trial—the barristers have their briefs, which they consult from time to time.

Clerk to Judge. The next case, my lord, is Montgomery Jones *versus* Montgomery Jones, an action for breach of promise of carriage, damages laid at £1,000.

Judge. Call it on.

Clerk. (*Calls.*) Montgomery Jones and Montgomery Jones.

Enter MRS. AUGUSTUS SPENCER MONTGOMERY JONES, *closely veiled, and attended by her maid; also, MR. AUGUSTUS SPENCER MONTGOMERY JONES, and friend.*

[*They take their seats.*]

Judge. Who is counsel for the plaintiff in this action?

Serg. C. I am, my lord.

Serg. T. And I appear for the defendant, my lord.

Judge. (*Writes.*) "Sergeant Clapper for the plaintiff, and Sergeant Turntwist for the defendant." Go on.

Serg. C. (*Rises to open the case.*) My lord, and gentlemen of the jury, this is an action for breach of promise of carriage, brought by the plaintiff, Mrs. Augustus Spencer Montgomery Jones, against her husband, Mr. Augustus Spencer Montgomery Jones. I have the honour to be retained for the plaintiff, and will state the facts of the case as briefly and clearly as possible, and I feel convinced that I shall succeed in moving your compassion as men, and exciting your feelings as gentlemen, in favour of the unfortunate lady who has this day the unhappiness to appear before you, relying upon that sense of justice which never fails to distinguish every enlightened Englishman.—Hem!

[*PLAINTIFF appears affected, puts her handkerchief to her eyes. SERGEANT CLAPPER continues.*]

Thirteen months ago, my client, now Mrs. Augustus Spencer Montgomery Jones, was unmarried, possessed of every charm of form and feature—

CHARADE.

One of the jury. We should like to be assured of that by ocular demonstration.

CLERK *calls out silence.*

[*They all stare at the PLAINTIFF in a critical manner, one or two using their eye-glasses.*]

Serg. C. (Continuing.) Possessed of every charm of form and feature, the idol of doating parents, my fair client was brought up in the midst of luxuries, which from long habit, became to her as the necessities of life. One of these necessary luxuries was, of course, a carriage; this is a point I particularly wish to impress upon your attention, whether she wished to go shopping, to make a morning call, to attend a ball or concert, or to take a drive in the park, a carriage was always at her command. A short time before the period I have mentioned, the defendant, Mr. Augustus Spencer Montgomery Jones, a gentleman of independent means, agreeable manners, and gentlemanly appearance (*here the JURY turn their eyes scrutinizingly upon the DEFENDANT, who passes his fingers through his hair and affects to be unconcerned*), became acquainted with my fair client, professed to conceive a deep attachment for her, and offered her his hand and heart; or rather, I should say, his heart and hand. It is unnecessary of course to state, that these proposals were accepted; but, gentlemen of the jury, before these proposals were accepted, a promise of carriage was distinctly and solemnly made by the defendant, and I shall call evidence to prove the fact.

My fair client, knowing the delicacy of her own constitution and habits, inquired of Mr. Montgomery Jones, whether if she married him, he would keep a carriage for her, to which he replied, "I will," and with a woman's trusting, unsuspecting confidence, my fair client relied implicitly upon that promise, and became his wife. That promise, gentlemen, has been broken, the defendant thinking, I suppose, that promises

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are like pie-crust, made to be broken, instead of being like preserves, made to be kept !

The defendant made various excuses for not ordering a carriage before the wedding, the principal of which was that as they intended travelling for a few months, a carriage would only be an encumbrance, and said that immediately on their return his wife should choose one for herself. Eight months has elapsed since their return from the wedding tour, and his poor wife has had no carriage ; but instead, she has had to endure the sneers of her ill-natured acquaintances, the pity of her friends, and has been obliged, by the man who vowed to love and cherish her, to go to dinners and evening parties in a hired vehicle ! And when I tell you, gentlemen of the jury, that my delicately nurtured client has actually been reduced to ride in an omnibus, a common omnibus, I am sure there will be no bounds to your indignation, for as gentlemen, as men of honour, as men of refined tastes, as men with wives, daughters, sisters, cousins, or intendeds, you cannot but feel the highest indignation ; and will prove it without hesitation, by returning a verdict for the plaintiff, with the whole amount of damages claimed, which is exactly the sum received by the defendant with the lady he has so shamefully deceived. Gentlemen of the jury, I will say no more, for I am sure, that more will be unnecessary.

[Sits down.]

Serg. C. (Rising.) Call Julia Ribbons.

Clerk. (Calls.) Julia Ribbons.

Mrs. A. S. M. J.'s maid. (Answers.) Here.

Serg. C. Stand up, if you please. Is your name Julia Ribbons ?

Julia R. Yes, it is, my lord, at present.

Serg. C. I am not "my lord" at present, whatever I may hope to be. What situation are you in ?

Julia R. One I was never in before, sir—witness in a court of justice.

Judge. Don't be impertinent, witness. Answer, what situation do you hold in the plaintiff's establishment?

Julia R. I am Mrs. Augustus Spencer Montgomery Jones's maid, my lord.

Serg. C. How long have you been in that lady's service?

Julia R. Ever since she was married, sir, and for two years before that.

Serg. C. Then I should think you must be a very trustworthy person. Do you remember a certain day, on which your mistress had a certain conversation with a certain gentleman about a carriage?

Julia R. Certainly I do, sir. I heard my mistress say to Mr. Montgomery Jones, "If I promise to marry you, will you promise to keep a carriage for me?" and Mr. Montgomery Jones said, "I will."

Serg. C. You distinctly heard him say, "I will"?

Julia R. Yes, sir, as true as I stand here.

Serg. C. That will do: you may sit down.

Serg. T. (Rising to cross-examine.) Stay, Julia Ribbons. I wish to ask you a question. What were you doing in the room when your mistress had this conversation with Mr. Montgomery Jones?

Julia R. Nothing, sir.

Serg. T. Do you mean to tell the jury that you were sitting in the room with your hands before you or behind you, doing nothing?

Julia R. No, sir, I wasn't; that is to say, I was—I mean, nothing particular.

Judge. (Sternly.) Don't prevaricate, witness.

Julia R. I wasn't in the room at all, my lord.

Serg. T. Then, how could you hear what was said?

Julia R. The door was partly open, and I was passing by.

Serg. T. Oh, the door was partly open, and you were passing by! Of course you did not stay to listen?

Julia R. Of course not, sir. I would not think of such a thing.

Serg. T. Then, might not the defendant have said, "I will—if I find I can afford it?"

Julia R. He might, sir, but I'm sure I don't know; I did not stay to listen.

Serg. T. That will do, Julia. *[Sits down.]*

Serg. C. I will now produce a letter in the defendant's handwriting, which will show how he deluded my client with false hopes of his sincerity. Shall I read the whole of it, my lord, or merely the part relating to the carriage?

One of the Jury. Oh! let us hear the whole of it, by all means.

Judge. I think it will be sufficient if you only read the part necessary as evidence.

Serg. C. (Reads.) "Dearest, I saw a carriage yesterday which I think would suit us exactly. I thought at the time how happy I should be sitting by your side in just such a carriage." With this letter, my lord, I close the case for the plaintiff. *[Hands the letter to the JUDGE.]*

Serg. T. (Rises.) My lord and gentlemen of the jury,—My learned brother has made a very eloquent oration, and no doubt has succeeded in exciting your pity for the lady whose fancied wrongs he has so pathetically depicted, but

that these wrongs are only fancied, I trust to be able to prove to your entire satisfaction. That the plaintiff is the daughter of wealthy parents, I admit, but she is not the only daughter; her parents have more "*idols*" than one, unless they are very partial in their affection for their children; the carriage which has been spoken of as entirely at her command was shared by her in common with her mother and sisters. My client, Mr. Augustus Spencer Montgomery Jones, although independent, is possessed of only moderate means, and being a prudent, careful, and honourable man, had no intention of living beyond his means, which he must have done had he set up his carriage on his marriage. Neither had he the slightest intention of deceiving the lady of his choice, or her parents; they knew the exact state of his circumstances and the amount of his income, and, gentlemen of the jury, I cannot but think that it showed a cold, calculating spirit on the part of the plaintiff, irreconcilable with true affection, to make conditions about a carriage before she accepted a proposal of marriage. I am instructed positively to state that the answer of the defendant, when spoken to on the subject, was, "I will if I find I can afford it." You will observe, gentlemen, that there was an "if" in the case; he did not merely say "I will," but "I will *if* I can afford it;" and the evidence of Julia Ribbons is certainly in favour of my client—either the trustworthy maid was listening, or, as she states, she merely caught the words in passing the door; now, in either case, she cannot swear that the defendant did not finish his sentence with the words I have quoted. My client had not been long married before he found that he could not support his wife in her extravagant style of living,

and keep a carriage for her too; and I have his banker's book to show, as evidence, that at the end of the year he had only the small balance of £10. Now, I put it to you, gentlemen of the jury, as men of sense, as men of business, as men with carriages, broughams, chaises, or dog-carts, whether it is possible for any one to keep a carriage and pair, a carriage and half a-pair, or merely a chaise and pony, upon a £10 note! A great deal has been said about the dreadful hardships the plaintiff has had to endure, by being compelled to ride in hired vehicles—and an omnibus has been particularly mentioned. Now, I will admit that an omnibus is not a very pleasant or desirable conveyance for a lady, especially in wet weather, or when it contains a pickpocket, but it was only to escape a severe wetting, and perhaps a severe cold in consequence, that the plaintiff once condescended to enter one of these vehicles for all classes, for I am instructed that only on this one occasion has the inside of an omnibus ever been graced by the aristocratic presence of Mrs. Augustus Spencer Montgomery Jones; and even if it were the contrary, I know from my own knowledge that an omnibus is considered a very convenient mode of transit, by people of the highest respectability, and I have no doubt that the gentlemen of the jury will agree with me on this point.

One of the Jury. The saloon omnibuses are very comfortable.

Sery. T. To be sure they are; it is not many days since I put my wife into one of them, and she did not make it a matter of grievance, although she does keep her carriage. With regard to the letter that has been read, or rather the

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extract from a letter, I need only remind you that any person is at liberty to say that he should like such and such a thing, or that such a thing would just suit him—there is no law against that; I shall only call one witness, and then I leave the case in your hands, feeling confident that even if you return a verdict for the plaintiff, you will only give one farthing damages. [Sits down.]

Serg. T. Call Frank Dashaway.

Clerk. (Calls.) Frank Dashaway.

Mr. M. J.'s friend. (Answers.) Here.

Serg. T. What is your name and profession?

Mr. F. D. Well, my name was called out loud enough just now; however, I have no objection to repeat it. I am Frank Dashaway, Esquire, at your service; no particular profession—sometimes one thing, sometimes another.

Serg. T. Do you know the defendant in this action?

Mr. F. D. I should think I did; he is my very particular friend; he tells me all his secrets; can't say I return the compliment, though.

Serg. T. Did he ever tell you that he had promised to keep a carriage for his wife?

Mr. F. D. No; what he said was this—"My intended wants me to keep a carriage for her; but you know, Frank, that as I have never been married before, I can't tell whether I can stand it, so she must wait awhile."

Serg. T. And that was all that passed between you on that subject?

Mr. F. D. No; I told him he was too careful by half; and that, if he took my advice, he would order a carriage and pair of greys directly, and go ahead, and dash away as I do.

CHARADE.

Why, the more splash you make, the more people think of you and talk of you; and if he had taken my advice, he would never have been defendant in a breach of promise of carriage.

Serg. T. That is undeniable; you may sit down, Mr. Dashaway, I have done. (*To Judge*) This, my lord, is the case for the defendant.

Serg. C. (Rising.) Stay, Mr. Dashaway; I will just ask you one question. You say that your friend, Mr. Montgomery Jones, told you that his intended wished him to keep a carriage for her, but that she must wait awhile for it. Now, on your oath, did he say that he had told *her* she must wait awhile for it?

Mr. F. D. No; I don't remember that he happened to mention what he said to her about it.

Serg. C. That will do.

[*Both sit down.*]

CHIEF JUSTICE SCALES *then addresses the Jury.*

Gentlemen of the Jury,—There are two sides to a question: you have heard both sides, and it is now your part to decide which side you will take. It is alleged, on the part of the plaintiff, that the defendant distinctly made her a promise of carriage. If you think the evidence proves a *bond fide* broken promise, you must return a verdict for the plaintiff, with such damages as you may agree upon. It is contended for the defendant that the promise was only conditional: if you are satisfied of that, you must return a verdict for the defendant. I cannot pay your memories such a bad compliment as to think you need a recapitulation of the evidence, and will only caution you to dismiss from your minds much

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that has been said by the counsel on either side, and give your attention solely to the facts of the case. Charging you to decide according to your own ideas and impressions, I now leave you to consider your verdict.

[The JURY consult, and then pronounce their verdict, which is received with loud acclamations from a crowded court. If it should so happen that they cannot agree, they must retire into another room until they are unanimous.]

END OF CHARADE THE FIFTH.

CHARADE THE SIXTH.
IN TWO SYLLABLES AND THREE ACTS.
ACT THE FIRST.

FIRST SYLLABLE.

CHARACTERS.

MR. CITYPEN *a rich merchant.*
MRS. CITYPEN *his wife.*
JULIA MARIA *their daughter.*
LEOPOLD LITTLE CASH . , . *a young and very civil
engineer, in love with
JULIA MARIA.*

SCENE.—*Drawing-room.*

OVERTURE.—“*The Power of Love.*”

Enter JULIA MARIA.

Julia. Mamma has gone, and it must now be the time that I told Leopold I should be alone. (*Looks at her watch.*) No, it wants five minutes. I am afraid I have done wrong in allowing him to come; but he was so very urgent, when I saw him for those two short minutes at the gate last night, I had no time to reflect, and I have been trembling ever since. If

CHARADE.

he is not punctual, what shall I do? Mamma will come home, and papa will return from the city, and find him here!

[*Low whistle heard.*]

Julia. Ah! There he is!

[*Runs out of the room, and presently returns with LEOPOLD; or, if there should be a conservatory leading into a garden, he might make his entrance that way.*]

Julia. Oh, Leopold! I have been dreadfully uneasy. Why did you urge me so much to let you come? What good can it do? It will only make mamma more bitter against you, if she should hear of it.

Leo. My dearest Julia, do not blame me; to-morrow I shall be far away, and I could not go without seeing you once more. You are my sunshine, my daylight, and the star of my existence. [Sings.]

AIR.—“*Beautiful Star.*”

“Beautiful star, with eyes so bright,
Oh say, you’ll fly with me this night.
Fly with me, away so far—

Julia. (Sings.) Oh, Leopold! Think of papa and mamma!

Leo. Away so far!

Julia. Papa and mamma!

Leo. Fly in the evening!

Julia. Papa! Oh, papa and mamma!”

Leo. My dear Julia, I am really quite tired of papa and mamma, not meaning any disrespect to Mr. and Mrs. City-pen, especially as they *are* your papa and mamma; but now do just listen to reason.

Julia. Ah! That is just what mamma says, when she

talks to me about you, she always begins, "Now, my dear Julia, do just listen to reason."

Leo. I hope you will think my reasoning the most convincing; to begin at the beginning, they cannot object to me for a son-in-law on the ground of family, for I have a strong suspicion that my pedigree is the longest of the two; tell me, Julia, do you know who your great-grandfather was?

Julia. No, I am sure I have not the slightest idea; I never heard of him, to my knowledge.

Leo. Ah! I thought as much; now *my* great-grandfather was a celebrated man; when he died a celebrated poet wrote his epitaph, and at this day his portrait hangs in the Institution of a celebrated town. So that point is settled. Then as to myself.

Julia. Hush! I hear something—(*Listens*)—it is carriage-wheels coming up the drive; it is mamma returned sooner than I expected! You must go, Leopold, immediately; pray, if you love me, go at once.

Leo. And as I do love you, I will not go; remember I belong to a Rifle Corps now, and must learn to face the enemy.

[*Loud ring heard.*]

Julia. (*In great alarm.*) Then if you will not go, you must hide; pray, do not let mamma see you, hide somewhere!

Leo. Where, dear? Under the table?

(*JULIA opens the lid of a long settee, and throws some fancy work out of it, upon the floor.*) Now, I am sure you could lie in here nicely, if you would only curl yourself up small; pray jump in, mamma will be in the room in another minute.

(*LEOPOLD stands in the middle of the room in a determined*

CHARADE,

attitude.) No, Julia, I will neither abscond, nor secrete myself.

Julia. Then I must. (*Retreats behind the window-curtain, and presently emerges with a very relieved countenance.*) It was not mamma after all, it was a strange carriage; I saw it drive away again.

Leo. Then we will resume our seats and our conversation. Where did we leave off?

Julia. You were going to talk about yourself.

Leo. Ah, yes! I was going to say that, as to myself, my character is irreproachable, or I would not presume to hold this delicate little hand in mine. Then my profession is a good one, though not very lucrative at present.

Julia. That is the only objection: if you were but rich, papa and mamma would soon consent.

Leo. But I mean to be both rich and famous some day. It is nothing uncommon for an engineer to be knighted, or even made a baronet! How would Sir Leopold and Lady Littlecash sound, think you? And now I must tell you that I am suddenly required to go to Charlestown, to inspect a railway we are constructing there. If I refuse to go, I destroy my own prospects; but how can I leave you?

[*Sings.*

AIR.—“*I’m off to Charlestown.*”—Chorus.

“I’m off to Charlestown early in the morning,

I’m off to Charlestown, and little time to stay;

So give me back my heart if you my love are scorning:

I’m off to Charlestown before the break of day.”

Do not bid me go alone, consent to be my wife at once, and go with me! By the time we return, your papa and

CHARADE.

mamma will be so glad to see you, they will welcome you with open arms.

Julia. Oh, Leopold ! how can you ask me ? You know I dare not, ought not, must not.

Leo. (Rising.) Very well, then ; stay, and marry the rich Mr. Nugget.

Julia. (In tears.) How cruel you are ! You know I cannot bear the man, although I am obliged to be polite to him, because mamma insists upon it.

Leo. Yes, *he* is privileged to come here whenever he may fancy ; he may be near you, may talk to you——

Julia. But the worst is, he fancies he can sing, and I have to play his accompaniments ; it only makes me think the more of you, who sing so beautifully, while he has no more tune in his voice than there was in that old barrel-organ you came to the gate with last night.

Leo. Ah ! was not that a good thought of mine ? I was walking along, wondering how on earth I could manage to see you, for I was determined to both see and speak with you before I started off, when my attention was attracted by a poor Italian, grinding away at a most detestable organ. At first I felt annoyed ; the sound jarred upon my nerves ; then suddenly the thought struck me that I might make use of it, and, for the consideration of half-a-crown, the man very readily exchanged hats and coats, and lent me his organ for a short time. Under the protection of that disguise, I thought I might safely approach Mr. Citypen's villa, and sing a song to attract his fair daughter's attention.

Julia. I knew the voice directly, and the air that you yourself composed. I was sure I could not be mistaken, and,

CHARADE.

under pretence of giving the organ-man some money, went down to the gate.

Leo. And now you cast me off! but what could I expect? You who have been used to comforts and luxuries, elegantly-furnished rooms, and a crowd of friends and acquaintances! How could I expect that you would leave all these for a small cottage such as I could afford, with only my love and care to make up the deficiency.

Julia. Oh, a cottage would be charming! I can imagine it exactly—all covered with roses and honeysuckle, and clematis and jessamine, and such a pretty little garden, where I would gather fresh flowers every morning for the breakfast-table!

Leo. But who would grow the flowers and keep the garden in order? I should be away the greater part of the day, and we could not afford to keep a gardener, as you do here.

Julia. Oh, I would be gardener! I would sow the seeds, and water the plants, and weed, and rake, and hoe; and you should only do the digging and the admiration. You do not know how economical I would be; we would only have one maid, and I would dress my own hair, and I dare say I could soon find out how to make my own dresses, and I would buy a cookery book, and learn how to make puddings and all sorts of nice things.

Leo. But in the winter,—how would you like a cottage in the winter, when there were no roses nor flowers in the garden?

Julia. Oh, in the winter we should be so snug: picture yourself coming home some cold winter's evening; you would enter such a snug little room, with a bright fire, the curtains



6th Charade—Act I.

"The Elopement."



CHARADE.

drawn close, and a nice little dinner, or a substantial tea awaiting you.

Leo. And a nice little wife to pour out my tea ; do not forget that, I like figures in a picture.

Julia. And after tea, you should sit in your easy-chair and read to me whilst I worked, or I would play and you should sing, or you should talk to me about your grand plans for becoming rich and famous, and I might help you a little perhaps. I can draw, you know. Oh, we might be so happy in our cottage ; but, alas ! we must not think of it, mamma would never consent.

Leo. Cruel girl, you draw a beautiful picture, and then drop a dark curtain before it to hide it from my sight. Some day, years hence, when you hear of one Leopold Littlecash, a lonely man, with no one to care for him in sickness or in health, no one to give him smile for smile, or tear for tear, no one to climb hand-in-hand with him up the steep hill that leads to distinction ; and when he arrives at its summit, no dear one to be proud of him and glory in his hardly earned fame. You will perhaps remember then, that you once pretended to love that man. Farewell, Julia, may you be happy.

Julia. (*Sobbing violently.*) But could I be happy, ought I to be happy, if I go with you ?

Leo. Will you, can you be happy without me ? Ask your own heart, and let it choose between us.

Julia. (*After a short pause.*) I have chosen ; wrong or not wrong, there is no happiness for me without you, I will go.

Leo. You will ! You have said it ! [*Sings.*

“ We’ll off to Charlestown, early in the morning,

We’ll off to Charlestown, and little time to stay ;

CHARADE.

So give me now your hand, my love you are not scorning ;
We'll off to Charlestown before the break of day."

Now, darling, you know what Shakespeare says, "If it were done, 'twere well it were done quickly." In ten minutes I will have a carriage in the lane by the back entrance, and my whistle shall be the signal that I am waiting for you. I will take you at once to my kind old aunt, whom you know ; early to-morrow morning we will be married, and start immediately afterwards for Charlestown. [*Loud ring heard.*

Julia. I will be ready ; but pray go now, this must be mamma.

Leo. One kiss to seal the compact, and I am gone.

Julia. Well then, kiss me quick and go.

Leo. (*Sings.*)

AIR.—" *Kiss me quick.*"—CHORUS.

" Kiss me quick and go, my honey,

Julia. Kiss me quick and go ;

Leo. To cheat surprise and prying eyes,

Both Kiss me quick and go."

[*LEOPOLD rushes out, followed by JULIA.*

AN INTERVAL OF ONE OR TWO MINUTES.

Enter MR. and MRS. CITYPEN. (*MR. CITYPEN appears to be deeply engaged with the TIMES newspaper.*)

Mrs. C. I am very glad you have returned earlier than usual, Mr. Citypen ; I wish to consult you at once upon a very important matter.

Mr. C. Won't it keep, my dear ? There was a very interest-

ing debate in the House last night, and I particularly wish to get through it before dinner; in fact, I came home early on purpose that I might be able to read it without interruption.

Mrs. C. That horrid budget, I suppose; you have talked of nothing else for the last four or five days; and I do think that 'budget' is an excessively vulgar word to be continually on the lips of anybody. I wonder the aristocracy do not alter it for something more refined. When I tell you that I wish to speak of your only daughter, Julia Maria, perhaps you will take your eyes off that paper, Mr. Citypen.

Mr. C. What is the matter now? Has Mr. Nugget proposed?

Mrs. C. No, and I hope he will not just yet, for I am sadly afraid the silly girl would refuse him; I cannot make her listen to reason, she is continually thinking of that Leopold Littlecash, just because he happens to be rather handsomer than Mr. Nugget. I tell her "Handsome is that handsome does," and that Leopold Littlecash is not in a situation to do anything handsomely.

Mr. C. Oh, if that is all, you may make your mind quite easy, my dear. I heard to-day he had been ordered off to Charlestown, to look after some contract they have got there. When once at a distance, she will soon forget him.

[*Resumes his paper; reads—"The honourable member, on rising, was received with loud cheers"—*

Mrs. C. Really, Mr. Citypen, this is too bad of you. I can assure you my mind is not at all easy. Do leave the affairs of the nation alone for a few minutes at least, and attend to the affairs of your own family,

CHARADE.

Mr. C. Ah, very true,—just so,—capital speech! Eh, my dear, what is it? has the footman given warning?

Mrs. C. No, he has not;—but perhaps you will remember that I had an appointment to-day, with a lady, about the character of a cook—

Mr. C. (Suddenly interested.) Oh yes, I remember, will she do? I hope you inquired particularly about her soup—I have not had any soup fit to eat for the last two months—excepting what I get in the city. By-the-by—did that turbot come in time? I ordered a fine one this morning,—I have invited a city friend to dinner to-day.

Mrs. C. You seem to think much more about your dinner than your daughter, Mr. Citypen; will you listen to what I have to say, or not?

Mr. C. Certainly, my dear, go on; I am listening.

Mrs. C. Before I came in, I just called upon that sweet woman, Mrs. Silver,—by-the-by—you have no idea what a beautiful new drawing-room carpet she has got. I cannot bear the sight of this old thing after hers.

[*Looks down at the carpet contemptuously.*]

Mr. C. Why, you don't mean to say this carpet is old?

Mrs. C. I do not mean to say it is in rags; but it is undeniably old-fashioned; *that* every one, who has got any eyes at all, *must* see,—in fact, Mrs. Silver was only saying just now, she considers it positively a duty I owe to myself and my position in society, to have a new drawing-room carpet.

Mr. C. And my duty, I suppose, is to pay for it. Well, well,—we will think about it; now if you would like a new French clock, or some smart jewellery, or a few dozen of

nice light French wine,—thanks to the treaty, I should have very little duty to pay. Let me see, where was I?—

[*Mrs. C. snatches the newspaper out of his hand.*

Mr. C. Really, my dear—

Mrs. C. I declare you shall not have it again, until I have finished. Perhaps you will think it of no importance that Mrs. Silver told me that she knows some one who told her for a certain fact, that Leopold Littlecash has been seen lurking about the neighbourhood, several times lately, of course in the hope of meeting Julia Maria.

Mr. C. (Starting up.) You don't say so; why didn't you tell me before? We must lock her up at once,—why, he will be trying to persuade her to go off to Charlestown with him, I should not wonder. (*Walks about in an agitated manner.*) Only let me catch him at it!

Mrs. C. (In a dignified tone.) Calm yourself, Mr. Citypen; he might try it, if he had the opportunity, which of course is what I wish to prevent; but I should wonder very much indeed, if a daughter of mine was to listen to any proposal of the kind. (*Leopold's whistle heard.*) An elopement indeed! Remember that Julia Maria has been brought up entirely under my own eye, and I am sure that no one can show a daughter more highly educated—she has had masters for all the accomplishments and all the languages—and besides, has taken lessons in Zoology, in Ornithology, in Entomology, and in Conchology.

Mr. C. And in Fishyology too,—do not forget that.

Mrs. C. What in the world do you mean?

Mr. C. Why, didn't I pay ever so much money for a

CHARADE.

grand stand for an aquarium, where there are lots of poor little fish found dead every morning?

Mrs. C. Julia Maria has an aqua vivarium; of course, *my* daughter must have everything that is fashionable.

Mr. C. Ah, that I know to my cost—and I know that it is not your fault that she is not a prodigy of learning, or mine either, considering the enormous sums of money I have paid to Professor This and Professor That; it is a good thing for my purse that we have only one daughter.

Mrs. C. And supposing we had three, like my friend Mrs. Silver?

Mr. C. In that case, the number of Julia's dresses would have to be divided by three. Then, as to education, we might manage in this way:—Number one to learn French; number two, Italian; number three, German.

Mrs. C. (Ironically.) And number one, the piano; number two, singing; and number three drawing, I suppose?

Mr. C. Precisely so. And one reading, one 'riting, and the other 'rithmetic.

Mrs. C. Do not be so absurd; you have quite wandered from the subject. What I mean to say is, that it is preposterous to suppose that we should allow a girl like Julia Maria, with all her advantages of education, fitted to move in the highest circles, to throw herself away upon a young engineer, who, whatever he *may* be, is now so poor, that I doubt if he even pays the income tax.

Mr. C. (In a grumbling John-Bull tone.) So much the better for him! Tenpence in the pound is no joke.

Mrs. C. And it would be quite as preposterous to suppose that our daughter would think of marrying without our per-

mission. I have now told you what I have heard. What do you think we had better do?

Mr. C. Why, we must by all means prevent him from having any chance of speaking to her. When once a girl gets in love, there is no telling what she might do: and I have noticed that Julia is inclined to be romantic. I should not wonder if she has some silly ideas about love in a cottage!

Mrs. C. Love in a cottage, indeed! Just fancy the smoky chimneys, the draughty doors, the rain coming through the ceilings, and black beetles running about on the floors! It really makes me shudder!

Mr. C. (*Shaking his head.*) Ah, but depend upon it, that is not Julia's idea of a cottage. She thinks it would be all roses, and summer, and sunshine, no doubt.

Mrs. C. Yes, a cottage covered with roses, with earwigs, and all kinds of creeping things coming in at the windows, with the sun penetrating into every corner of the paltry little rooms, until she would be stifled for want of air. I cannot think that for this she would willingly renounce wealth and comfort; at any rate, it is our duty to prevent her from doing what she would most certainly repent. I was thinking a slight course of mathematics might be beneficial—help to counteract that romantic tendency.

Mr. C. Mathematics! no, no, the girl has been crammed enough. I shall give the policeman orders to take up any one he may find lurking about my grounds; and you must not let Julia out of your sight until this presumptuous young man has gone off to Charlestown, and then we must take her out and amuse her. She must see the new opera, and go to the Crystal Palace, and all that sort of thing.

CHARADE.

Mrs. C. And Mr. Nugget will be delighted to join our party.

Mr. C. Well, now that is settled, don't you think you had better go and dress for dinner? (*Looks at the newspaper which she still holds in her hand.*) Make yourself look very nice, as you always do. (*Takes the paper.*) By-the-by, where is Julia?

Mrs. C. In her room, I dare say. She said she did not care about going with me for the cook's character. I will just go in and see her. [Exit *Mrs. CITYPEN*.

[*MR. CITYPEN settles himself for a comfortable reading, and has just become absorbed in his paper, when he is startled by Mrs. CITYPEN rushing into the room in a frantic manner with an open letter in her hand. She exclaims, wildly, "Look, look, she is gone!" sinks into a chair, and faints away. Poor Mr. CITYPEN throws down his paper, uttering several exclamations, and hastens to support his wife.*

Mr. C. Oh, dear! she has fainted. What can be the matter? what is the proper thing to do?—some water!—Ah! there should be some here. (*Dips his fingers into a flower-vase, and sprinkles her face with the water.*) A smelling-bottle!—where can I find one? (*Searches the room in vain; it then occurs to him that his snuffbox may do instead; it produces a fit of sneezing, and restores her to consciousness. She then gives him the letter. Mr. CITYPEN reads:—*"Dearest Mamma,—When you read this, I shall be far away"—Far away! What! already? Has she really eloped, in spite of all the precautions we—were going to take?

CHARADE.

Mrs. C. She has gone off with that Leopold Littlecash, and you must go after them directly.

Mr. C. (Bewildered.) But where have they gone? which way have they gone? which way shall I go?

Mrs. C. Which way?—why, all ways! Take an express train one way, a postchaise another; set all the telegraphs to work, and give information at all the police stations.

Mr. C. Yes, I will. Where is my hat? I will go off at once—directly—this moment. Only let me catch him!

[Exit, followed by MRS. CITYPEN.]

END OF ACT THE FIRST.

ACT THE SECOND.

SECOND SYLLABLE.

CHARACTERS.

DIANA DARING *a fast young lady.*
CAROLINE CAUTIOUS *her friend—not fast.*
EDWARD CAUTIOUS *brother to CAROLINE,*
and engaged to
DIANA.

One of the Icemen belonging to the Royal Humane Society.

CHARADE.

OVERTURE.—“*The Skating Polka.*”

SCENE—*Part of the carpet covered with a sheet (not fastened down), which must be supposed to be ice.*

Enter DIANA and CAROLINE, muffled in furs; DIANA attired in the extreme of the prevailing fashion for winter.

Diana. Look here, Carry; this will do beautifully. Here is a nice, clear, smooth piece of ice, where Edward can practise without interruption.

Car. (Doubtfully.) It is smooth enough, but it looks very thin.

Diana. Thin? nonsense, child! Why, one would think your brother was a Daniel Lambert; it will bear him well enough, never fear.

Car. But I am sure this part must be considered unsafe, or why should every one have left it? See, the people are all at the other end (*looking towards audience*).

Diana. That is just like you,—always afraid of something: skaters are always drowned; sailing-boats are always upset; chaises overturned, and horse-riders thrown, according to you.

Car. How you exaggerate, Diana!

Diana. Not at all. You know you actually wanted to persuade Edward not to enter a volunteer corps, for fear he might accidentally get a hole drilled through him with a rifle-ball. Thank goodness! I am not such a timid mortal as Miss Caroline Cautious.

Car. Well, but, Diana, I cannot conceive why, if you

really care for Edward, you should want him to risk his life in this foolish way. You know he dislikes skating, consequently is not at all expert.

Diana. Dislike it?—nonsense! He ought to like it; every man ought to skate. Surely he can do what I can; and I should have no more fear of venturing on that ice this minute than I should in walking across a drawing-room carpet. You did not come to the ladies' skating-party the other day. I can assure you your humble servant, Diana Daring, received not a few compliments upon the occasion.

Car. But do you think skating is quite a feminine accomplishment, Diana?

Diana. Feminine fiddlestick! I wish Edward would make haste. I suppose you do not wish *him* to be feminine; and I am determined he shall cut a figure on this very spot.

Car. Yes; cut a figure he will, indeed, by tumbling into the ice.

Diana. You really put me out of all patience! Just try it with your foot. (*Tries it herself in several places.*)

Car. (*Drawing back.*) No, thank you; I only like ice at balls.

Diana. Well, my dear, imagine yourself at a ball. I have often danced a quadrille upon the ice; we have not enough for one now, but when Edward comes, we three could manage a Scotch reel nicely. You need not look so horrified; I am not going to drag you on. (*Looks towards the door.*) Oh, here comes my lord at last, not hurrying himself in the least.

Enter MR. EDWARD CAUTIOUS.

Diana. Come, sir, give an account of yourself. Why have you kept us waiting here in the cold so long?

Edw. I am very sorry, dear, I was detained,—unexpectedly detained. You should not have stood still; we had better take a brisk walk now, to warm you again.

Car. Oh yes, do let us go into Kensington Gardens.

Diana. Please to remember, Mr. Edward, that we came out on purpose to find some ice where you could practise your skating,—there could not be a better place than this; so, perhaps, you will commence at once. I hope you will succeed in cutting the figure of eight before we leave.

Edw. Ah!—yes—I suppose it is tolerably thick?

Car. Not so thick that your fall would not break it; you would go in, I am sure you would. Edward, pray do not risk it.

Diana. In! nonsense,—if he were to fall, he would not go in—his fall would not break the ice, the ice would break his fall.

Edw. And my head too, perhaps—don't talk about it. I might happen to get an ugly bump. It's capital exercise though, skating—is it not? (*Rubbing his hands as if he really thinks so.*)

Diana. “Fain would you skate, but that you fear to fall.”

Car. “If thy heart fail thee, do not skate at all.”

Let us come away, Diana. See, all those people are looking at us. (*Glancing to audience.*) Do not listen to her, Edward.

Diana. I am not afraid of being looked at—and if Edward does not listen to me now, he shall never have a chance of listening to me again. So you are *afraid*, Edward, are you?

Edw. (*Trying to laugh.*) Afraid! How truly absurd! I am going to skate away immediately,—it's capital exercise,

capital; you shall see what a splendid figure I will cut. Who's afraid?—Let me see, where shall I start from? (*Walks irresolutely from side to side.*) It is really very cold—how my teeth chatter,—we have not settled where we shall go for our walk—afterwards.

Diana. Never mind that; I am quite impatient to see you begin.

Edw. I am going to begin directly. (*Shivering.*) Dear me, how very cold it is—don't you think it is very cold?

Car. Not so cold as the water will be.

Edw. The water, what nonsense; I'm not going into the water, am I, Diana?

Diana. (*Impatiently.*) Will you begin?

Edw. To be sure, to be sure,—here goes.

[*He makes two or three false starts; then a slide or two; and suddenly falls down backwards at full length, managing, at the same time, to pull the sheet over him. Caroline screams loudly.*]

Diana. How very awkward of him!—he really deserves a cold bath.

Car. (*In great distress.*) Oh, Diana, you have killed him. See, the ice has closed over him; he will be drowned, and you ought to be taken up for manslaughter! What shall we do?

Diana. Why, call for help, of course,—somebody must come and pull him out; I don't think I can reach him, myself.

[*Tries to reach him, but is pulled back by Caroline, who calls for help; a man belonging to the Royal Humane Society comes to their assistance.*]

CHARADE.

Man. Man in, I suppose—of course ; what would any one expect ? I must put a board “ Dangerous ” up here. Don’t be alarmed, ladies ; I’ll soon have him out ; I see his coat-tail. How young gents will be so foolhardy I can’t imagine. Any one might have seen, with half an eye, that this ice wouldn’t bear (*dragging him out*) ; why it’s not thicker than a sheet—of paper—he’ll come to himself presently—we’ll just rest his head against this bank. I’ve got some brandy in my pocket (*produces a bottle, and holds it to Edward’s lips*),—these young gents are so fond of showing off before the ladies—that’s what it is. You’re better now, sir ; can you stand up ? Lean on me.

Edw. (*Rising slowly, and shivering violently.*) How very cold it is.

Diana. Come, Edward, you are all right now.

Man. Will you have a cab, ladies, and take him home ; or shall we put him into one of our warm baths ?

Car. Oh no, thank you, we are extremely obliged to you, but we will go home at once. Let us go immediately, that he may get off these wet clothes.

Edw. (*To DIANA.*) Didn’t I cut a figure ?

[*Exeunt Omnes.*]

END OF ACT THE SECOND.

CHARADE.

ACT THE THIRD.

THE WORD.

CHARACTERS.

MR. BROWN } Clerks in a telegraph office.
MR. THOMPSON }
FANNY FIDGET.
MATILDA MERRY.

OVERTURE.—“*The Express Galop.*”

SCENE.—*An office,—table with desks and writing materials.*

Enter MR. BROWN, he listlessly divests himself of his Inverness cape, lazily takes his seat at a desk, yawns, stretches, and rubs his eyes.

Mr. B. What a thorough nuisance, to be obliged to be in the office at nine o'clock, when you did not go to bed till five; it is past nine though, and Thompson is not here, I shall take great credit to myself for being first. Perhaps I shall have time to answer that dear little note before he comes.

[Takes a three-cornered note from his pocket-book, kisses it, and searches his desk for some note paper.

[A bell heard.

Mr. B. That bell already! What on earth can people want to send telegraphic messages at this time of the morning for? Thompson not here too! What am I to do? How can I read a message off, and write it down at the same time? My head is not at all clear, notwithstanding the two bottles of

CHARADE.

soda water. (*Bell rings again.*) Ring again, by all means I must try what I can do, I suppose; horrid nuisance though, just when I was thinking of my belle, *ma belle* Isabelle.

[*Reads off the message from behind a window-curtain.*

To MESSRS. A, B, & Co., Mincing Lane, City.

Delay—your—intended—purchase.—It must—not—be made—to-day.—I have—important—particulars—by post. (*Returns to his desk and prepares to write it down.*) “Important particulars by post;” let me see, what was the first part? Oh, “Delay your intended”—no, I don’t think that was it, I shall forget it all in a minute. (*Writes.*) Make your intended—purchase,—it must not—be delayed a day. Yes, I think that is quite correct. (*Writes.*) Important particulars—will come by post. I hope that is all right. (*Puts it into an envelope and leaves the room—his voice is heard outside, directing a porter to take the dispatch to MESSRS. A, B, & Co., Mincing Lane—he then returns and resumes his note.*) If I am interrupted again, I will not answer for the consequences—I shall have to use the telegraph to hurry Mr. Thompson, presently, I think.

Enter MR. THOMPSON.

Mr. B. I say, what a fellow you are, to leave me in the lurch this morning; here have I had a most important message to send off; you’ll be in for it, if there is anything wrong.

Mr. T. Oh, it will be all right, I daresay. How do you find yourself this morning?

Mr. B. Remarkably sleepy! How are you? You look rather seedy.

CHARADE.

Mr. T. Do I? Well, I must confess to a splitting headache; I don't think that champagne was very first-rate.

Mr. B. It was a first-rate ball though! Oh, those fairy forms, those delightful polkas, those whirling waltzes—(*Bell rings.*)—Bother that bell! What's up now? Thompson, you must read.

(*Thompson reads.*) Keep—the bandbox—until—called for. Well, that is a curious message at any rate, what can it mean? I think they must be hoaxing us at the next station.

Mr. B. Oh no, it's all right, there was a bandbox left in the excursion train yesterday; it was put here somewhere, I believe, to be taken care of. Talking of boxes, I have got an order for the English Opera to-night, will you go?

Mr. T. I will tell you by-and-by, my dear fellow; at present, I really feel it would be too much exertion to go anywhere. I do not think I can even read the paper.

[*Pulls a newspaper out of his pocket.*]

Mr. B. What have you got there? 'The Times?'

Mr. T. No, 'The Daily Telegraph.'

Mr. B. Keep it to yourself then, pray; I would have nothing to do with telegraphs for the next twenty-four hours, if I could have my will. What shall we have for lunch? Some spiced ale?

Mr. T. Oh, no! that's common. The duty is taken off nutmegs, remember. In fact, in these degenerate days, it is difficult to find anything that is not common. I thought at first it would be rather an aristocratic thing to be a rifleman; but I assure you I seriously think of retiring, volunteering has become so dreadfully common.

Mr. B. Just so; I am glad I did not join, though I might

CHARADE.

have done so, had they chosen me to be captain. I have no notion of being ordered and marched about, and drilled, and all that sort of thing. *Cæsar aut nullus !*

Mr. T. We shall be perfectly inundated with captains and lieutenants. I would not be one if they were to ask me; but —*revenons à nos moutons* — what were we talking of? Lunch—ah! we will consider that subject presently. I feel rather curious about that bandbox. I wonder whether it belongs to an old woman or a young one.

Mr. B. (*Looking towards the door or window.*) I should not be surprised if these two young girls are coming to inquire after it. Do not tell them we have got it; let us have some fun.

Mr. T. With all my heart; anything for a little amusement; there is nothing at all in the papers this morning.

Enter FANNY FIDGET and MATILDA MERRY.

Fanny. (*Curtseying.*) Oh, if you please, sir, is this the Telegraph Hoffice?

Mr. B. Yes, this is the Telegraph Hoffice. What can we have the pleasure of doing for you?

Matilda. We have lost our bonnets, if you please, sir; and they told us as how we were to come here, and you would find them for us, sir, if you please, sir.

Mr. T. I am sure Mr. Brown and myself will use our utmost endeavours to do so. Allow us to offer you seats. (*They place chairs.*)

Mr. B. But really I cannot think your bonnets any loss, when you wear such becoming hats.

Fanny. Ah, but, indeed, sir, they are a very great loss. I

don't know what we shall do if we can't find them. (*Puts her handkerchief to her eyes.*)

Mat. Lor', Fanny, don't be such a fidget: don't go and cry again, for gracious sake.

Mr. B. I see you do not suffer such trifles to affect you. Those bright eyes are not often dimmed with tears.

Mr. T. But how did you lose these pretty bonnets? for pretty they are, I am sure, or they would not belong to you.

Fanny. Why, sir, this is how it was:—we had been on a visit, 'Tilda and I, and we came home yesterday in the excursion train, and both our bonnets were in one box, and——

Mat. And the fact is, sir, there was such a lot of people pushing in and out, that Fanny got so frightened, I was obliged to take care of her——

Mr. B. And leave the bonnets to take care of themselves, I see. I wish I had been there; I would have taken care of both you and the bonnets too.

Mat. You are very kind, I am sure, sir.

Fanny. Do you think you will be able to find them, sir?

Mr. T. I hope so, unless some one has sat upon them, and crushed them all to pieces.

Fanny. Oh, 'Tilda! what shall we do?

Mat. Do? why, be quiet, to be sure, until the gentleman finds out whether they are crushed or not.

Mr. B. Quite right. I perceive you have a great deal of sense. We will commence operations immediately. (*Dips his pen in the ink.*) The first thing to be done is to take down your names and addresses.

CHARADE.

Mat. My name, if you please, sir, is Matilda Merry, and I live at Number 3, Prospect Row, Whitechapel.

Mr. T. (To FANNY.) And yours?

Fanny. Fanny Fidget, if you please, sir, and I live in the next street to 'Tilda, where there's a pump at the corner.

Mr. T. (Pretending to write it down.) Very good. The next thing, I think, Mr. Brown, will be a description of the lost bonnets.

Mr. B. Certainly. (To MATILDA.) Perhaps you will describe them to us—very minutely, if you please.

Mat. Mine, if you please, sir, was mauve—mauve, spotted all over with gold, with blue strings.

Mr. B. (Aside to MR. T.) Mauve and blue! Did you ever hear of such a mixture?

Mat. And it had some pink flowers at one side.

Fanny. Mine, sir, was all pink—pink—I forget the name of it.

Mat. Derry, I think they called it.

Fanny. Yes, that was it. Derry—pink Derry—and it had five rosettes, with a steel buckle in the middle of each rosette. They wanted me only to have three, but I didn't think that would look handsome enough.

Mr. T. I admire your taste; but had you no flowers in it?

Fanny. Oh yes, sir, a crownet of scarlet poppies, with a bunch of wheat ears at each side.

Mr. T. I do not wonder at your distress, such a bonnet as that is not to be met with every day.

Fanny. No, indeed, it is not, sir; we only wears them on Sundays.

Mat. And when we go out a visiting.

Mr. B. The next thing necessary to be known is where you bought those charming bonnets.

Mat. At a very fashionable shop in Whitechapel, sir,—at Mrs. Smart's.

Mr. B. (Writes.) "Mrs. Smart, Whitechapel." Now, Mr. Thompson, I think we may proceed to telegraph. We will telegraph to all the stations on the line, and inquire whether any such bonnets as you have described have been seen.

Fanny. But, sir, they were in a box; the bonnets could not be seen.

Mr. T. Ah! very true, they could not; unless, indeed, the box happened to come into collision with a heavy trunk; in that case it might be smashed,—excuse me, I meant to say, broken. You could then, if it was insured, come upon the company for damages.

Mr. B. Do not look so alarmed,—I hope and trust there will be no damage in the case. Will you give me a description of the box, what was it like?

Mat. Like mottled soap, sir, only purple.

Mr. B. Very explicit, indeed.

[*Shrill whistle heard.*]

Mr. T. There goes the Express! (*To BROWN.*) We must put an end to this now.

Mr. B. Yes, we must find the box. (*He then pretends to telegraph behind the curtain.*) The box is found and will be here directly. (*To the girls.*) I have desired them to shoot it along the telegraph wires; if you look up in that direction (*points*) you will see it coming.

[*The girls, with many ejaculations of astonishment and delight, fix their eyes upon the place indicated.*]

CHARADE.

Mr. B. There it comes ! Thompson, stand ready to catch it. (*He tosses the box, which must be concealed behind the curtain before the scene commences, to THOMPSON, who catches it, and it is immediately seized by the girls with a torrent of thanks. They inquire what they have to pay, but the gallant clerks will not hear of payment,—very politely bow them out, and then make their bow to the audience.*)

Mr. B. Our office is closed, our business is done,

Mr. T. And we hope that our play your approval has won.

END OF CHARADE THE SIXTH.

POETICAL CHARADES.

A STORM AT SEA.

THE Storm King flew o'er the waters blue,
They rose as he passed on his way ;
The waves he lashed till they foamed and dashed,
And the sun hid his face in dismay.

The wind rushed by with a moaning cry,
As if in some terrible pain ;
The clouds looked down with a darkening frown,
And threatened to heavily rain.

A sharp look-out there was kept no doubt,
On that ship, for its captain reckoned
The storm would be worst in the midst of—*my first*,
And not once did he turn—*my second*.

Ah ! down goes *my third* ! Now voices are heard,
The passengers try conversation ;
Amongst them was one, who good deeds has done,
And *my whole* is this one's appellation.

THE WARRIOR KNIGHT.

THE sun shines bright, and a warrior knight
Comes galloping over the plain,
He urges his steed to impetuous speed,
With spur and with slackening rein.

Full many a mile has he ridden in style,
For he mounted at dawn of day,
And ate of *my first*, without quenching his thirst,
Before setting out on his way.

With a heated face he now slackens his pace,
And eagerly glancing around,
My second espied, and was soon by its side,—
Refreshment within it he found.

This knight, you must know, has a journey to go,
A very long journey indeed,
A visit to pay, and a word he must say
Without quitting his trusty steed.

A castle appears ; see, a lady in tears
Waves a kerchief of spotless white,—
My whole he now cries, then on swiftly flies,
And is hid in a moment from sight.



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Poetical Charades.

"The Warrior Knight."

P. 158.

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ANSWER TO "A STORM AT SEA."

At *night* the storm would be worst,
Then, heaven's artillery burst,
Then, all trembled and prayed.
No sleep indeed, for who could sleep?
A faithful watch the sailors keep,
To close an eye afraid.

The captain walked the deck, amidst that fearful din
Of thunder, wind, and waves, and would not once turn *in*.

Sobbing and sighing the *gale* went down,
Morning dispersing the darkening frown
That covered the face of the sky.
How are the passengers, how do they feel?
Some are discussing the morning meal;
Others—the danger gone by.

And one is there who never shrinks from sound of woe or wail,
A woman, gently born and bred,—her name is—*Nightingale*.

ANSWER TO "THE WARRIOR KNIGHT."

OUR knight who thus rides as if really he must,
Thinks naught of the pantry or larder ;
His breakfast consisting of merely a crust,
No *fare* could be drier or harder.

When heated and parched, see, a *well* he espies,
So refreshing and cool is the water ;
He drinks, and then straight to yon castle he hies,
For a word with the baron's fair daughter.

The maiden keeps watch,—of course then she knows
That her knight on a journey is starting ;
“*Farewell*” he must say, and then onward he goes,
Leaving her full of sorrow at parting.

CHARADE THE SEVENTH.

IN TWO SYLLABLES AND THREE ACTS.

ACT THE FIRST.

FIRST SYLLABLE.

CHARACTERS.

MR. COBALT *an artist.*

LIEUTENANT READY.

MRS. HIGGLES *a lodging-house keeper.*

POLLY *maid of all work.*

OVERTURE.—“ *Oh dear, what can the matter be ?*”

SCENE.—*First floor front room in a state of the utmost artistic disorder—tables and chairs strewn with paintings and drawings, colours, palettes, brushes, chalks, pencils, &c.,—daubs of paint upon a crumb cloth, which covers a part of the carpet (these may be represented by pieces of irregularly cut coloured lining, slightly stitched to the crumb-cloth)—several portfolios about, and an easel in one corner of the room—a small tray with a plate containing a mutton-chop bone, knife and fork, &c., upon the floor ;*

CHARADE.

also, several cigar ends, a pale ale bottle and glass in one chair, and a newspaper in another.—On the table a sketch of a child's head, apparently in progress.

Enter MRS. HIGGLES. (*Stops short as soon as she gets inside the room, and holds up her hands in astonishment and dismay.*)

Mrs. H. Oh, my goodness! What a mess! (*Goes a little farther into the room.*) Oh, my gracious! *What* a mess!! Oh, my goodness gracious, what a dreadful mess the room is in, to be sure! To think that my first-floor front, that I only let to single gentlemen, should ever be in such a state as this; why, half-a-dozen children couldn't have made it worse! (*Calls.*) Polly, leave off sweeping them stairs, and come here directly.

Enter POLLY, with dust-pan and broom.

Polly. Oh, lor, mum, what a mess!

Mrs. H. Just what I said myself, Polly, and you never said a truer word in all your life; how lucky I happened to come up! Folks say that my new lodger is a great London painter come here for change of air, so when I heard him go out just now, I thought I'd just come up and have a look at his pictures, but this room is a picture I never expected to see in my house.

Polly. Oh, lor, mum, he's been and gone and upset his nasty paint on the nice, clean crumb-cloth, that I took such pains with, and washed in hay water to make it a good colour.

Mrs. H. So he has, and I warrant you those colours won't wash out; he'll have a new crumb-cloth charged in his bill, or my name isn't Mrs. Higgles.

Polly. And instead of ringing the bell like a Christian, for me to clear away his things, he's put his tray on the floor, and his beer-bottle and glass on a chair, and I declare, if it ain't all wet with the drippings!

[*Wipes the chair with her apron.*

Mrs. H. Well, clear them away now, Polly, as fast as you can, and we'll try to get the room tidy before he comes in. I'll just let him know that I don't approve of my lodgers making such a mess of the place. Here's a lot of crumbs and cigar ends too, I declare; talk about smoky chimneys, I'm sure smoky lodgers are a much greater nuisance; next time I put a bill up, I have a great mind to have at the bottom, "No smoking allowed."

Polly. (*With an oracular shake of the head.*) Ah, mum, then see if you'd get any lodgers; why, mum, my young man says to me, says he, "Polly," says he, "smoking is one of the necessaries of life;" and he goes to a Hinstitootion of evenings, mum, he does.

Mrs. H. (*Dignified.*) I don't wish to know your young man's opinion upon the subject, Polly. Sweep up the crumbs.

Polly. (*Sweeping away vigorously.*) Ah, mum, this new lodger ain't such a nice, quiet gentleman as the last one, he often gived me a shilling, and was so soft spoken and pleasant. He used to say, "Polly, will you have the goodness to do this," and, "Polly, will you please to do that," it was quite a pleasure to do anything for him; but this new lodger, mum, he nearly upset me on the stairs, mum, he run down so fast, and banged the door after him like mad.

Mrs. H. Well, great man or not, I won't have his heavy pictures on my best chairs scorching their backs like anything; so they shall just stand down. (*Lifts them down and stands them on the floor, with their faces to the wall; jumbles all the brushes and pencils into a box; collects the scattered drawings, puts them into the portfolios, and carefully ties them up.*) What is this? (*Holds up an unfinished drawing—head of a child, in crayon.*) I suppose this is what he has been busy about all the morning.

Polly. (*Putting down the dust-pan and looking over her shoulders.*) It looks as how as if it was going to be a little boy, mum—p'raps it's a photography.

Mrs. H. Nonsense, Polly; photographs are not done a bit

at a time, like this, they're all done at once, before you can say Jack Robinson—it's the sun that does them.

Polly. Lor, mum, that is quick—but I didn't know our lodger had got a son.

Mrs. H. (With a lofty consciousness of greatly superior knowledge and understanding.) Oh, of course, Polly, you can't understand it—but never mind, I'll put it carefully away in this little portfolio. *(Places it in the smallest portfolio, which she puts in a corner of the room, as much out of sight as possible.)* The room begins to look tidy now—excepting those nasty blotches of paint—such a mess as it was in, to be sure. Run away with some of these things, Polly; quick, make haste. *[Exit POLLY, with tray.]*

[MRS. HIGGLES ranges the chairs in formal order against the walls of the room. Loud knock and ring heard.]

Mrs. H. Oh, my goodness, here he is! *(Calls.)* Polly! Polly!

Enter POLLY.

Polly. Yes, mum; here he is, mum.

[Catches up her dust-pan and broom, and is running hastily out, when she knocks against the open door, and upsets all the crumbs, cigar ends, &c., upon the carpet.]

Mrs. H. Oh, Polly, how could you be so stupid? Brush them up again directly; do make haste.

Polly. (Sweeping.) Oh yes, mum, I'll soon have 'em up. *(Louder knock and ring heard.)* My goodness me, he'll knock the door down.

Mrs. H. There, that will do, go and let him in for gracious sake; I'll bring these. *[Takes up the bottle and glass.]*

[Exit POLLY.]

Mrs. H. (Looking round.) Yes, it does look tidy now, such a mess as it was in, to be sure. *[Exit Mrs. H.]*

CHARADE.

Enter MR. COBALT. Stops short as soon as he gets inside the room.

Mr. C. Hulloa, I've come into the wrong room—(looks round)—no, I have not—why, what is the meaning of all this? Has that officious, meddling landlady been daring to touch my things? [*Rings the bell furiously.*]

Enter POLLY.

Polly. Please, sir, did you ring?

Mr. C. Ring, yes, I should think I did; who has been doing this?

Polly. (Innocently.) Doing what, sir?

Mr. C. Meddling with my drawings; was it you? answer me directly.

Polly. I'm sure I didn't touch one of the drawings, sir; it was missis as put 'em tidy.

Mr. C. Then send your mistress to me; vanish! begone! [*Exit POLLY.*]

[*MR. COBALT paces the room, evidently in a passion.*]

Enter MRS. HIGGLES.

Mr. C. Mrs. Higgles, I sent for you to tell you that I consider you have taken an unwarrantable liberty in meddling with my drawings and disarranging my things in this way.

Mrs. H. Disarranging, sir! why, begging your pardon, sir, you left the room in such a mess, I thought you would like it put tidy.

Mr. C. Then I beg you will remember, Mrs. Higgles, as long as I stay here, that I allow no one to touch my drawings but myself. (*Opens a portfolio, looks eagerly over the drawings, and scatters them upon the floor.*) But where is my child? what have you done with my child?

Mrs. H. I didn't know you'd got one, I'm sure, sir, or you wouldn't have had my apartments; I never take in children.

Mr. C. (Looks under the table and all about the room, pulling the chairs away from the wall, but misses the small portfolio.) My beautiful child, my Royal Academy child! Woman, what have you done with my child? how dare you to lay your profane fingers upon it?

Mrs. H. (Indignantly.) I'll have you to know, sir, that I am not a "woman," and I won't be called a "woman;" my last lodger, who was a pattern to all lodgers, not excepting the present company, sir, always called me "good lady" when he didn't say "Mrs. Higgles;" and I won't have my fingers called names either—they're as good fingers as anybody's.

Mr. C. Perhaps you will leave the room, before I say something unbecoming to a gentleman.

Mrs. H. If gentlemen choose to get into such tantrums for nothing, they are best left to themselves; so good afternoon to you, sir. *[Exit Mrs. HIGGLES.]*

Mr. C. Oh, what has the woman done with my child?

(Sings.) AIR.—"The Lost Child."

"Oh dear, oh dear, my heart will break; I shall go stick,
stark, staring wild!

(To audience.)

Has ever a one seen anything like the head of a half-
finished child?

I've looked everywhere; but no, he's not there; oh, why
did I leave him about?

He's stolen, I'm sure, and I'll lock the door the very next
time I go out.

Oh, will no one tell me where he's gone,

Or whether or no he has been torn,

My bursting heart with grief is worn,

I've lost, I've lost my child.

He has but one eye, which is black, and you'll know him
by that if it's him.

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7th Charade—Act 2.

"The old Man."



CHARADE.

His hair is meant to be curly and thick, but at present it's rather thin ;

His nose is a beautiful shape that's quite new, and his lips look as if they could speak ;

And he's worth five pounds, and twenty besides, that he is any day of the week.

Oh, will no one tell me where he's gone?" &c.

[*Tap at the door.*

Mr. C. Keep out.

[*Another tap.*

Mr. C. Keep out, I say.

[*Another tap.*

Mr. C. (*Impatiently.*) Who's there?

Enter LIEUTENANT READY, *in full-dress uniform.*

Lieut. Sir, have I the honour to address Mr. Cobalt, the celebrated portrait painter?

Mr. C. My name is Cobalt; I am an artist; and I do sometimes condescend to immortalize the lineaments of distinguished individuals.

Lieut. Then you will not refuse to immortalize mine. I am Lieutenant Ready, of her Majesty's 1001st Volunteer Rifles. I flatter myself you could not wish for anything more distinguished.

Mr. C. Take a chair, Lieutenant Ready. (*Waves his hand to a chair, and seats himself opposite.*) I do not think I can undertake your portrait. I meant to be quite incog. here. I merely came for a little change; to study nature, and collect a few ideas for my Academy picture—and the person of the house has made herself so extremely disagreeable to-day, and put me to such inconvenience, that I seriously think of starting off somewhere else. (*Aside.*) My child, where is my child?

Lieut. Oh, pray, sir, do allow me to persuade you to remain a little longer—we are not often honoured by having such a man of genius amongst us—directly I heard you were here, I thought to myself that I must not lose such a chance of

CHARADE.

having my por—hem—my lineaments immortalized—sharp's the word, you know, with military men ; so, as I was going to parade this afternoon, I thought I would drop in, that you might see me in full fig.

Mr. C. There is a photographer in the place, why not go to him ?

Lieut. No, thank you, not I indeed ; I have no notion of being caricatured by a sunstroke—my eyes sunk into my head, and my nose and mouth swollen as if I had been in a prize-fight—my wrinkles deepened ten years, and then have it called a likeness ! no, I wish nature portrayed by the hand of art—by the masterhand I see before me. [Bows.

Mr. C. (Bowing in return.) Sir, I see you appreciate our divine art—I will take your portrait—my price is fifty guineas ; and the uniform will be ten guineas extra.

Lieut. Done ! It will be full length, of course—life size—and I wish to be taken in the act of giving the word of command.

Mr. C. Give it, that I may notice the attitude.

Lieut. (Rises.) Halt ! Right about face ! Stand at ease ! Shoulder arms—make ready—present—Fire !

Wheel about, turn about, and all that, you know.

Turn about, wheel about, and do just so.

[Resumes his seat.

Mr. C. Very good ; that will do. Now I must just see if I can catch your expression ; for I must tell you, lieutenant, that I never peril my reputation, or waste my valuable time, by painting a portrait, unless I can first make sure of the expression of my sitter.

Lieut. And do you ever fail ?

Mr. C. (Shrugging his shoulders.) Why, if people have no expression, what is to be done ? I do not choose my name to be associated with an inexpressive portrait.

[Looks out some paper—empties the box of pencils, &c. upon the table—selects one, and begins to sketch.

CHARADE.

LIEUTENANT READY, *in his anxiety that his face should look expressive, makes a variety of laughable contortions.*

Mr. C. (*Mutters*)—

“He has but one eye, which is black, and you may know him by that, if it’s him”——

Lieut. Mr. Cobalt, sir—do you mean to say that I have got a black eye?

Mr. C. (*Taking no notice.*) That won’t do.

[*Tears the paper in half, and throws it upon the floor—takes a fresh piece and another pencil—sketches for a minute—then mutters:*]

“His hair is meant to be curly and thick, but now it is rather thin.”

Lieut. Really, Mr. Cobalt, you are making some extremely personal remarks—I believe I have a tolerably good head of hair. [*Passes his fingers through it with an injured look.*]

Mr. C. (*Impatiently.*) That won’t do. (*Tears up the paper, and throws it upon the floor.*) I must find some more paper. (*Looks about, and catches sight of the small portfolio.*) Oh, those women, those women! (*In hastily untying the portfolio, drags the string into a knot, which he cuts with his pen-knife—turns its contents out upon the table, seizes the missing drawing, and waves it triumphantly above his head, to the great astonishment of LIEUTENANT READY, who begins to think him not perfectly sane.*) My child, my child, I’ve found my child. (*Sings.*)

“Oh, you little darling, wasn’t I riled,
But saints be praised, I’ve found my child.
With joy I shall go almost wild,
I’ve found, I’ve found my child, I’ve found my child.”

Mrs. H. (*Putting her head inside the door.*) Dear me, sir, I’m very glad to hear it. I just happened to pass the door, and heard you say so.

CHARADE.

Mr. C. Come in, Mrs. Higgles. (*Enter MRS. HIGGLES, with POLLY behind her.*) I forgive you this once, if you will promise never to do so any more; and on my part I promise not to make more mess than I can help in your rooms for the future, and will be particularly careful never to call you "a woman" again.

Mrs. H. And I'm sure, sir, if you don't like your things to be touched, I won't touch them any more, now you speak like a gentleman, sir.

Polly. Gentlemen, as is gentlemen, behaves as sich, and acts accordingly.

Mr. C. Lieutenant Ready, we will have our first sitting to-morrow, at eleven o'clock.

Lieut. I will be ready, sir, as I always am; and will now take leave. [*They bow.*]

Mrs. H. And Polly put the kettle on, and we'll all have tea.

END OF ACT THE FIRST.

ACT THE SECOND.

SECOND SYLLABLE.

CHARACTERS.

SIR HORACE WINDERMERE . . . *a young baronet.*

MR. LANCASTER.

CONSTANCE RUTLAND . . . *engaged to SIR HORACE.*

FLORENCE DORSET, *her cousin.* *engaged to MR. LANCASTER.*

MRS. GRUNDY.

FOOTMAN.

CHARADE.

CVERTURE.—“*The Surprise.*”

SCENE.—*Morning room in a country house.*

Enter CONSTANCE RUTLAND, *in light summer attire*—addresses
some one behind her.

This room looks nice and cool ; pray walk in, Mrs. Grundy,
and rest yourself.

Enter MRS. GRUNDY.

Mrs. G. I am afraid I am paying you a very long visit, Miss Constance ; but I think I must sit down again for a little while. Your hothouses are really beautiful ; far superior, in *my* opinion, to Mrs. Matlock's, although not *quite* so extensive. I believe she thinks *her* pinery, and *her* grapery, and *her* fernery, and *her* aviary, and *her* conservatory, to be the best in the county—such a proud, stuck-up woman ; and everybody knows that she married for money, and that her family are as poor as rats, although they are as proud as peacocks.

Con. I have always understood that Mr. and Mrs. Matlock are very much attached to each other,—and live very happily together.

Mrs. G. (*Shaking her head.*) Ah, my dear, you must not believe *half* you hear ; you will find that out by the time you are *my* age.—But how extremely hot it is !—I am sorry your mamma is not at home, I wanted to have a chat with her—I really think I must loosen my bonnet—I feel quite annihilated with heat.

Con. Oh pray do, Mrs. Grundy, and allow me to offer you some refreshment—a glass of wine—or some lemonade, my favourite drink—that will be more cooling, perhaps.

[*Rings the bell, which is answered by a footman ;* CON-
STANCE *desires him to bring some lemonade.*

Mrs. G. Thank you, Miss Constance, I really will not say no ; I don't think I should have asked you to take me

through the hothouses if I had known it would have made me so very warm.

[*Fans herself with her pocket-handkerchief.*]

Enter FOOTMAN with lemonade.

Mrs. G. (Tasting it.) Oh, this is delicious—would you give me the receipt?

Con. That I am sorry I cannot do—we buy the syrup in bottles, and merely put the water to it ourselves.

Mrs. G. (Hastily removing the glass from her lips.) Dear me, Miss Constance, how do you know it is not adulterated? Have you had it dissected?

Con. Dissected!—excuse me, I do not quite understand.

Mrs. G. Well, I don't mean exactly dissected, but it is much the same thing—dear me, what *is* the other word?

Con. Analyzed, you mean; oh no, we never thought it was likely to be adulterated, and I often drink it in the summer time.

Mrs. G. Ah, my dear, you are not so suspicious as I am; when you have lived to *my* age you will know that things as well as people are not always what they seem to be, or what they ought to be. (*Looks doubtfully at the lemonade.*) I am so afraid of being poisoned, and one does read such dreadful things in the newspapers.

Con. I can only say that I have never been poisoned; but on the contrary, have always found it very refreshing.

Mrs. G. Well, if that is the case, I think I will take another glass, it is certainly very nice.

[*Drinks off the contents of the glass, which CONSTANCE replenishes.*]

Mrs. G. (Looking out of window.) How lovely your lawn looks. This is a beautiful place; but do you not feel dull sometimes?

Con. Oh, no, I can always find occupation and amusement;

and now I have my cousin Florence with me, I cannot possibly be dull.

Mrs. G. Miss Dorset! Ah, it was her then I saw walking with you and Mr. Lancaster down Oak-lane, the other evening.

Con. I certainly did walk down Oak-lane with Florence and Mr. Lancaster one evening this week.

Mrs. G. Ah, Mr. Lancaster is a fine young man, a very fine young man—in fact, I know a certain lady who thinks him an exceedingly fine young man; but he won't be thought anything of when Sir Horace Windermere comes home, all the young ladies will set their caps at the baronet.

Con. Young ladies do not wear caps, Mrs. Grundy.

Mrs. G. Well, my dear, of course if you take it in a *literary* point of view, they do not; but they wear nets—nets and arrows, which are much more dangerous; depend upon it, if Sir Horace should come home single, *unaccountable* nets will be cast to catch him and his title.

Con. Really, Mrs. Grundy, you seem to have a very poor opinion of young ladies; we “should be wooed, and not unsought be won,” much less seek.

Mrs. G. Oh, pray, my dear Miss Constance, do not fancy for a moment that I meant to include *you*. I know you are too proud to do anything of the sort, you would rather die an old maid than endeavour to *extract* any one—not that I think there is the slightest fear of *that*, oh, no. Indeed, I *have* heard we are to lose Miss Rutland *very* shortly; but I dare say, now, you wouldn't believe that Amelia Salisbury pretended illness when old Dr. Bluepill was away, in order that she might have a visit from young Mr. Powder, who was minding his practice for him.

Con. I do *not* believe it, because I know it is not true. Amelia was really ill, I was with her at the time; she had a severe shivering fit, and her father insisted upon sending for a medical man. It is really too bad of people to say such malicious things.

Mrs. G. Ah, my dear, you are only eighteen ; when you have lived to *my* age, you will find that people *will* talk when people give occasion for it. What do you think of Miss Chester contriving to meet Major Ramrod so often in her walks ?

Con. I should think it more likely that Major Ramrod contrived to meet Miss Chester, than that she contrived to meet him.

Mrs. G. It may be so, but that is what people say. Let me see, what was I talking about ? Oh, Sir Horace—he will be of age next month, so, of course, will come home, and I will tell you in confidence—but mind, it is a profound secret at present—that he is *engaged*, and will probably bring his bride home with him.

Con. I have heard that he is engaged ; nevertheless, I thank you for the information, and I think, Mrs. Grundy, you had better let all the young ladies in the place into the secret, it may save them some of the trouble you seem to think they would take ; but it is not at all likely he will marry until he is of age, and has taken possession of his estates.

Mrs. G. There I must differ from you. I have it from *unquenchable* authority, that Sir Horace is engaged to a beautiful Italian lady of high rank—a countess, I believe—and that he will most likely be married at Rome, in about a week's time.

Con. An Italian lady !

Mrs. G. Yes, an Italian lady, with a very long name, which I really forget—my memory is not *quite* so good as it used to be ; but what is the matter, Miss Constance ? you look pale. I am afraid I have tired you. I am nice and cool now, so I will be going. (*Rises.*)

Con. (*Hurriedly.*) Oh, no, not at all, it is nothing, merely the heat ; it is, as you say, very hot, quite oppressive.

Mrs. G. Well, good morning, dear. I should advise you to lie down. My kind regards to your papa and mamma,

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and compliments to your cousin. I dare say she will remember me. 'If you will allow me, I will cross the lawn, it will be shorter than going round the drive. Pray don't ring, *good morning.* [Exit MRS. GRUNDY.

Con. (*Agitated.*) This, then, is the reason I have received no letter for so long, and the last so cold and hurried. I thought he was changing (*buries her face in her hands for a moment*); but shall I care for one who can be so fickle, so inconstant? No, I care for no one who does not care for me. (*Takes a small photograph from her dress, and throws it carelessly from her, it falls upon the carpet.*) Thus I cast him from my heart; and this ring (*taking one from her finger*), I will not wear it a moment longer. (*Drops it into a work-box.*)

Enter FLORENCE.

Flo. Well, Constance, I have not half-finished my letter; but don't scold me, I shall be done in time for the post. You have had a visitor, have you not?

Con. Yes, Mrs. Grundy has been here.

Flo. Mrs. Grundy! Oh, that odious woman, she has been victimizing you, I am quite sure. I can see it in your face. If there is any one I do abominate, it is Mrs. Grundy. You look quite pale, Constance. (*Sitting herself beside her.*) If you have really allowed any of her absurd tittle-tattle to vex you, I must say you are extremely silly; you will fidget your life out if you mind all that Mrs. Grundy says. Come, tell me what unfortunate mortals have been the subject of her remarks to-day.

Con. I will tell you by-and-by. I think she has given me a headache, she would stay so long in the hothouses. Go, dear, and finish your letter, I shall be better presently.

Flo. (*Kissing her.*) Mind you keep quite quiet then. I think you had better go to your room and lie down.

(*A trembling voice is heard outside.*)

"Pity the sorrows of a poor old man,
Whose trembling limbs have brought him to your door."

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Flo. (*Looking out.*) Why, Constance, here is an old man at the glass door. He seems to be a beggar. Shall I ask him what he wants?

Con. Yes, dear, do.

(*FLORENCE leaves the room for a moment, then returns.*)

Such a nice old man, Constance, with such white hair, and a long white beard, and he begs most imploringly to see Miss Rutland.

Con. Let him come in.

[*FLORENCE ushers in the old man, who stands respectfully by the door, leaning on a stick. He has on a large cloak, which nearly covers him, and a green shade over his eyes.*

Con. I am Miss Rutland—what can I do for you?

Old Man. (*Seeming to speak with difficulty, interrupted by an asthmatic cough.*) I have been told that Miss Rutland never yet turned the poor man away from her door, without giving him some help.

Con. I will never willingly do so. Are you in want of food? If you will go round to the kitchen, I will order you some immediately.

Old Man. No, lady, not food, only rest, and a trifle to help me on my way. Do not send me to the kitchen, lady—let me sit here for a few minutes. I am not a common beggar, I was a gentleman once, or I would not take the liberty of asking such a favour.

Con. Poor old man! (*To FLORENCE.*) I am sure he has seen better days. He shall sit down here if he wishes it; and you, dear, had better finish your letter. I will send him some refreshment, and then go and lie down.

Flo. I suppose I must, or I shall not be in time for the post. [*Exit FLORENCE.*

Con. Sit down, old man. (*Opening her purse.*) Here is a trifle for you, and you shall have some ale before you go, I

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am sure you must be thirsty, walking the dusty roads this hot day.

[*Exit CONSTANCE, the OLD MAN returning her many thanks.*]

Old Man. (*In a very different voice.*) Dear Constance! I could scarcely refrain from disclosing myself, she had not the slightest suspicion I was so near her, although she used to declare she should know me anywhere, in any disguise. She does not seem in very good spirits, but that, of course, is accounted for by my absence; and there is one thing, I noticed, she does not wear my ring, but it may want repairing, or something of that kind; I will not make myself uneasy about *that*. But really, Miss Rutland, it was rather imprudent to leave a poor beggar like me in the room alone. I might steal, goodness knows what; you could not see honesty in my face, I think. I really ought to pocket something, to teach her a lesson in prudence. (*Looks about the room, and perceives the portrait on the floor—picks it up.*) Thunder and fury! no ring, and my photograph on the floor! What does it mean? Could not her love stand the test of absence? Have I a rival? But I will soon know, and will pocket this at any rate. (*Suiting the action to the word.*)

Enter FOOTMAN.

Foot. Hulloo! You there, stop thief! Is that the way you thank ladies for their kindness? I saw you pocket something, give it up—do you hear?—or off you go to the cage; an old man like you, too, ought to be ashamed of yourself.

[*Tries to collar him, the pretended OLD MAN shakes him off, and menaces him with his stick, exclaiming,*
Menial! Touch me not, begone!

Foot. Well, I must say, you are a very strong man for your age; and what's more, I don't believe you are an old man, you're an impostor, that's what you are, and you'd better give up your thievings quietly, I can tell you.

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MR. LANCASTER and CONSTANCE *appear at the door.*

Mr. L. Why, John, what is all this noise about? What has this old man been doing?

Foot. He's an impostor and a thief, sir; I saw him pick something up and put it in his pocket, and he won't give it up.

Con. (*Advancing.*) A thief! This old man! Oh, surely it cannot be.

Mr. L. My dear Miss Rutland, you had better retire, and leave him to me, I will soon settle him.

Sir H. (*Enraged.*) Settle me, will you? And who are you, pray? And what is your business here? Answer me that.

Mr. L. (*To Con.*) Miss Rutland, let me entreat you to retire. (*To OLD MAN.*) Your age protects you from the punishment your impertinence deserves, give up what you have stolen immediately.

Sir H. (*Blinded by jealousy, entirely forgets his disguise, and exclaims.*) My age, indeed! I will soon show you that I am quite old enough to thrash half-a-dozen such puppies as you. Your card, sir, I demand of you the satisfaction of a gentleman.

Mr. L. Poor fellow, he must be a lunatic; John, I think you and I could manage him between us.

John. (*Alarmed at the word lunatic, retreats with the utmost expedition.*) Don't you think, sir, I had better fetch some assistance?

Mr. L. Well, perhaps you had; and be quick. (*Exit footman.*) Miss Rutland, pray do not be alarmed.

Enter FLORENCE.

Flo. Why, what is the matter, what is there to be alarmed at?

Sir H. Pish! I forgot this stupid disguise.

[*Hastily throws off cloak, wig, beard, and green shade.*
(White wool crimped and combed out, will make a very good beard.)]

Con. (Of course in the utmost surprise.) Horace !

Flo. Sir Horace !

Mr. L. Is this Sir Horace Windermere ? Really, sir, I must trouble you to explain the reason of this mummary ; I believe your friends thought you were in Italy.

Sir H. Mummary indeed ! I did not think my frolic would end in such a serious manner. Miss Rutland, I owe *you* an explanation. I wished my return to take you by surprise, and foolishly determined to test a declaration you once made, at the time we were so fond of dressing up for charades ; that you would not fail to know me under any disguise. I knew that a poor beggar might easily obtain admittance to your presence ; but had I known the change that has taken place in your sentiments, I should not have thought of intruding upon you.

Con. I change ! What do you mean ?

Sir H. Where is my ring ? You wear it not ! Where is my likeness ? You have it not ! I presume, this gentleman knows that you once honoured me, by entertaining the idea of becoming Lady Windermere.

Con. (Confused.) But I was told ; Mrs. Grundy told me that—that you were going to marry an Italian lady.

Flo. Oh, Constance, you don't mean to say you listened to Mrs. Grundy.

Mr. L. (To *Sir H.*) Ah ! I see your misapprehension ; I believe I can set all this to rights ; you have no cause for jealousy, Sir Horace. (To *Florence.*) Your hand, Miss Dorset, (Leading her forward.) This is my shrine, and *here* I pay my devotions.

Sir H. Indeed ! I am delighted to hear it ; sir, I shall be most happy to make your acquaintance ; I am sure we shall be capital friends.

[*They shake hands.*]

Mr. L. But you do not know my name. Florence, will you introduce me ?

[*Florence performs that ceremony.*]

[*In the meantime, CONSTANCE has possessed herself of her ring, and is looking anxiously about for the portrait.*]

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Sir H. And you, Miss Dorset, will you not shake hands with me, we used to be very good friends.

Flo. With pleasure. (*They shake hands.*) But you have not shaken hands with Constance.

Mr. L. Oh, this will be an adjourned meeting presently; and farther business will be discussed with closed doors. What are you looking for, Miss Rutland?

Con. Oh, nothing, nothing very particular.

Sir H. Very flattering indeed; I presume this is the "nothing particular" you mean. [*Produces the portrait.*]

Foot. (*Appears at the door.*) Please, sir, please, miss, I've brought the coachman, and the stable boy, and one of the gardeners, and the other will be here directly.

Mr. L. Oh, tell them they are not wanted; the old man has disappeared, and I do not suppose we shall see him again.

[*Exit JOHN, muttering.* So much the better, I'm sure I didn't feel inclined to tackle him.

Mr. L. And as our little Comedy of Errors is now played out, I vote we pair off; Miss Dorset, will you honour me?

[*Offering his arm. Exeunt Omnes.*]

END OF ACT THE SECOND.

ACT THE THIRD.

THE WORD.

CHARACTERS.

ARTHUR PENANINCK . . . a young author.

HARRY RUSHFORTH, . . . his friend, a young volunteer
—Rifle or Artillery.

MRS. CAULIFLOWER . . . aunt to Arthur.

PRINTER'S BOY.

CHARADE.

OVERTURE.—“*Kate Kearney.*”

SCENE.—*Three-pair back-room, rather scantily furnished.*

*Arthur P. (Seated at a writing table, scribbling away at a railroad pace—he is pale, and rather wild-looking about the head—suddenly stops short and exclaims)—*Why, what have I written! *(Hastily makes an erasure with his penknife.)* Fool, madman that I am; I, who have built so many airy castles upon this, my first book, to suffer such vain, idle, presumptuous thoughts to interfere with its completion—and that printer’s boy has been here twice already. I promised the last chapter to-day, and it must be done. *(Appears to read over a portion of the manuscript, then throws it down despondingly.)* It is of no use, I cannot in the least remember what I intended to say next. Oh Kate, Kate, bright, beautiful Kate; yes, to myself I may call her Kate—but I might as well “fix my affections on some bright, particular star.” I cannot hope that she will think of me. What did I write last night, when “tired Nature’s sweet restorer, balmy sleep,” refused to close my eyes? I’ll read it o’er, perhaps it may do me good. *(Produces a sheet of note paper from his blotting-book and reads)—*

Be still, my heart—be cool, my throbbing brain,

Why dream of that you never may attain?

For though your ideal realized you see,

Your standard reached, though lofty it may be,

Why should perfection stoop on you to think?

Dreamer, awake! and from such visions shrink.

I give myself good advice, but it seems hard to follow. I do think her perfection, but I dare say if I were to know her better, I should discover that, like all mortals, she has her faults; nevertheless, I should love her still the same—yes, I should love her still the same. [Tap at the door.

Arthur. Come in.

Enter PRINTER’S BOY.

Boy. Please, sir, are you ready? Master says I am not to

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go back again without the rest of your copy ; we're all a waiting for it.

Arthur. Ah ! well, I shall not be long, I have nearly finished ; you can wait outside on the landing.

Boy. Very well, sir, only please don't be long, or master will be angry, and say I've dawdled about the streets, sir.

[*ARTHUR waves his hand. Exit BOY.*

[*ARTHUR knits his brows with a determined look, and resumes his writing. Sound of a bugle heard, with an alarum of knuckles upon the door. ARTHUR looks up in dismay.*

Enter HARRY RUSHFORTH.

Arthur. My dear Harry, I am delighted to see you, but I am so dreadfully busy, and the printer's boy is waiting.

Harry. That little imp I saw on the stairs, I suppose, and nearly tumbled over. Well, I'll not stay a minute ; I came to rouse you up, and take you to see the drill ; a little fresh air will do you good ; you look like a ghost (although I am happy to say I never saw one) ; now, tell me, did you not sit up all last night scribbling ?

Arthur. No, not all night, but I did not sleep very well, and have rather a headache.

Harry. Ah, that comes of bothering your brains—but if you will be an author, I cannot help it. Let me see, I think I have a message for you from my sister Kate.

Arthur. (Animated.) A message from your sister Kate !

Harry. (Slowly.) Yes, she told me to be sure and not forget ; but for the life of me I cannot remember it just now.

Arthur. (Alarmed.) Oh, nonsense, Harry, you are joking.

Harry. Indeed, my dear fellow, I am not ; I really have forgotten what it was, or I would tell you directly—but I don't suppose it is of any great importance ; people shouldn't give me messages when they know what a bad memory I have. Why, I once kept a letter in my pocket for two or three days, instead of posting it. I am safe to forget letters and messages.

Arthur. Then I will be careful not to give you any of mine; but I do wish you would remember your sister's message.

Harry. There, for goodness sake don't look so anxious about it; when I go home I will ask Kate what it was, and if it proves to be *very* important, and worth the expenditure of fourpence, it shall come by the District Telegraph.

[*ARTHUR bites his lips, and makes an effort to resume his writing.*

Harry. Now, Arthur, it really grieves me to see you shutting yourself up in this way, in this dismal three-pair back—excuse me, I did not mean to affront your rooms, but an extensive view of chimney pots is not the most enlivening. You will work yourself into a consumption if you do not take care; do you think you should like the taste of cod-liver oil?

Arthur. Not particularly, I think.

Harry. Then why not become one of us; join our corps—it will make a man of you, give you height, strength, breadth, and colour. Are you aware that you are contracting a stoop? Now, the exercise and drill would remedy all that—in fact, I am sure your good aunt, Mrs. Cauliflower, would then say that London decidedly agreed with you; but if she were to see you now, she would certainly send for the family physician immediately.

Arthur. And suppose I had to drill on damp grass, in a pouring rain, it is my idea that would send me into a consumption as soon as anything, or give me rheumatic gout, or something else as pleasant and as easily got rid of.

Harry. Well, it is fine enough now, we have had no rain to-day, and as I mean, for friendship's sake, to try and read your book, I think you might come and see me drill.

Arthur. Some other time I will with pleasure; but as you cannot read my book until it is printed—and as it cannot be

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printed until I have finished writing it—and as I have engaged that it shall be ready to-day—

Harry. The sooner I go the better, I suppose; so *au revoir*—if I remember Kate's message I will run back and tell you. (*Sounds the bugle.*) Isn't this a nice little instrument? I guess I rather astonish the good people of the house, but we always use it at home instead of the dinner-bell; in fact, I believe it is very generally adopted. We have become quite a military nation, instead of being a mere nation of shop-keepers, and we contrive to combine the two in the most delightful manner. Our principals of warehouses and offices, instead of being called by the old title of "governor," are now styled either colonels or captains—the chief clerks lieutenants, &c., and so forth, and so on; but here I stand chattering, and you are wishing me away—so once more good bye. Don't fret about the message; Kate shall send you two next time to make it up. [Exit HARRY.]

Arthur. (*Throwing down his pen and pacing the room with an air of great vexation.*) I declare if Harry were not Kate's brother, I could quarrel with him with a hearty good will—to forget a message from *her* to *me*, who treasure every word she utters; if I found it difficult to write before, how can I now? However, I have one consolation, she does think of me sometimes—she does not utterly forget my existence—I must live upon that—and my book—she will read it perhaps—yes, I *will* finish it immediately.

[Resumes his seat and pen.]

Voice (heard outside.) Oh, dear me, I am quite out of breath mounting all these stairs. Little boy, can you tell me if this is Mr. Arthur Penaninck's?

Boy. Yes, mum, this room's is'n.

[Tap at the door.]

Arthur. "Oh, my prophetic soul, my—aunt!"

Enter Mrs. CAULIFLOWER, with two baskets, one very large, and the other small and round. She puts the large basket on the floor, the small one on the nearest chair,

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rushes to ARTHUR (who, of course, meets her half way), and embraces him.

Arthur. My dear aunt, you in town !

Mrs. C. My dear Arthur, my dearest nephew, how shockingly ill you are looking ; why, you are as pale as a parsnip !

Arthur. A trifling headache, that is all, and I happen to be rather busy ; but do sit down, aunty. (*Places a chair for her.*) When did you come up ?

Mrs. C. Only this morning, dear ; you might be sure I should come and see you the first thing. (*Takes a survey of the room.*) But, Arthur, how came you to lodge in such a place as this ? (*Shakes her head.*) Ah, I thought you would not be comfortable without me to look after you. I shall stay in town a few days, and I must set you to rights. (*Opens the large basket and takes from it various things, which she enumerates as follows:*)—I have brought you some apples, and some gooseberry jam, and some red currant jelly, and a plum-cake, and a loaf—(*uncovers the small basket*)—and some new-laid eggs. And oh, Arthur, I had such a disaster with these eggs—although I took such care to pack them into this round basket, and to carry it quite by itself for fear of a breakage—when I got into the railway carriage I put it down on the seat beside me (a nice soft cushion, you know, could not hurt it), there was plenty of room, only one other lady in the carriage—but when we stopped at the next station two gentlemen got in, and before I could move my basket, one of them sat right down upon it ! I screamed out, and he jumped up immediately—with trembling fingers I untied it, and found that two of the eggs were broken, and running all about the basket—I did feel so annoyed.

Arthur. It was very annoying, and very careless of the gentleman ; I presume he apologized.

Mrs. C. Oh yes, I believe he did, but that did not mend them, and what to do I did not know. I tried to throw

them out of the window, but the yolk kept slipping out of my fingers, and the white ran all down my dress.

Arthur. Never mind, aunty, it might have been worse. I shall be very glad of these, and all the nice things you have loaded yourself with; I am sure they will be delicious, coming from home.

Mrs. C. And as we killed a pig yesterday, I thought you would like a nice little hand of pork, and a chicken; but the boy who brought this large basket could not carry the hamper as well, so you shall have it by-and-by.

Arthur. Indeed, my dear aunt, I am exceedingly obliged to you for taking so much trouble for me; I shall certainly feel quite hungry presently—quite ready to pitch into something, as Harry would say.

Mrs. C. Harry Rushforth, you mean. Ah, he is a great favourite of mine—I should like to see him again. But look, here is something else. (*Exhibits a beautiful bouquet of flowers.*) Your cousin Mina gathered these for you this morning quite early, just before I came away.

Arthur. (*Taking them from her.*) Oh, these are lovely; I will put them in water immediately. (*Puts the bouquet into flower vase.*) It is very good of Mina to remember how fond I am of flowers. There, no one can say my room looks dismal now. Where are you staying? I will come in the evening and have a nice talk, and hear all about everything and everybody.

(*MRS. CAULIFLOWER is slow in taking the hint, unties her bonnet, and loosens her shawl.*)

Mrs. C. Yes, to be sure, and we all want to know how you are getting on; but is that little boy outside all this time? Who is he? and what is he waiting for?

Arthur. Well, aunt, he is a printer's —; I will not shock you by naming his exact designation—he is a printer's boy, and is waiting for my—copy. I am sorry I am so busy to-day.

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Mrs. C. (Perplexed.) Dear me, Arthur, is he something very bad?

Arthur. No, no, not at all. I dare say he is a nice, inoffensive kind of boy, but he does not like to be kept waiting.

Mrs. C. (Relieved.) Oh, if he is a nice boy, I will give him a piece of cake. I like nice boys. I've got some in my pocket that I didn't eat when I was in the train. I thought I should sure to be hungry travelling. (*Takes a slice of cake from her pocket, and opens the door.*) Here, little boy, here is some cake for you.

Boy. (Eagerly.) Oh, thank you, mum.

Arthur. (Aside.) Well done, aunt, a sop for Cerberus, he will not mind waiting a little longer now. Oh, my poor book!

Mrs. C. (Returning to her seat.) And so he is waiting for a copy, is he, dear? I well remember the copies I used to write: A, Avoid bad company; B, Be ever industrious; C, let me see, I can't remember what C was; D, Do nothing rashly; E, Endeavour to excel; and I really think, Arthur, I could not give you better advice than those four copies: Avoid bad company, Be ever industrious, Do nothing rashly, and Endeavour to excel.

Arthur. Very good advice, indeed, aunty; but I have not asked after my uncle and my cousins, and all the pets—Zephyr, and Daisy, and Beauty, and Trillo, and Joey, and Bobby, and last, though not least, Madam Catalina.

Mrs. C. All quite well, dear, birds, and pussy, and uncle, and cousins, all well, and all send their love; as for Sambo, I am sure he misses you very much.

Arthur. Dear Sambo! I ought not to have forgotten him. I wish I had him here, he would be quite a companion for me; but the bustling streets would scare him out of his wits.

Mrs. C. To be sure they would, and somebody would be sure to steal him. No, no, Arthur, we can't let Sambo come to London.

Arthur. Oh, no, not to be thought of. (*Looks at his*

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watch.) My dear aunt, will you excuse me now? I have a little business I must attend to, and I will be sure to come and see you in the evening.

Mrs. C. You don't mean to send me away yet, Arthur; why, I have only just come, and I want to know all about yourself, and what you are doing; your cousins complain that you are not a good correspondent.

Arthur. You shall ask me as many questions as you like in the evening; but I have some writing here, I must finish. Remember, dear aunt, I did not know you were coming, or I would have taken care to be disengaged. Are you staying with Mrs. Podgers, in Cornhill?

Mrs. C. Yes, and if you come early, you shall see Mrs. Podgers's baby; it is quite a duck of a baby, and must be I don't know how many months old by this time, so I shall give it a slice of cake. I think I have got some more. *(Dives into her pocket, and brings forth another slice of cake.)*

Arthur. Months old, and eat cake! Why, I should be afraid of its choking.

Mrs. C. Oh, no fear, you have no idea how precocious the rising generation are now-a-days—so different when I was young. What do you think of a child nine months old eating cold beef, mustard, and pickles, and another riding a pony at eighteen months?

Arthur. I am perfectly wonderstruck!

Mrs. C. A fact, I can assure you, Arthur; and now, as you are busy, I think I will go; but, my dear boy, pray take care of yourself. I must make you some herb tea, it is very strengthening, and I dare say I could send it somehow by the train; if I bottled it, and put it in a hamper, and labelled it, "Glass, this side up, with care," I should think it would come safe.

Arthur. I have no doubt of it. Good bye, dear aunt, good bye for the present. Do you think you can find your way down? *(Attends her to the door.)*

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Mrs C. Oh, yes, dear, don't you come, good bye.

[*Exit MRS. CAULIFLOWER.*]

Boy. Please, sir, are you ready?

Arthur. In a few minutes, my boy. (*Resumes his seat.*) My aunt's visit seems somehow to have put me in better spirits, I think I can write now. (*Writes desperately, and presently exclaims*) There, "The End." I have finished, my labour of love is ended. (*Glances his eye over a page or two.*) Yes, that will do, it seems all correct, I need not copy it out. And now my little bark is ready to be launched upon the sea of public opinion. It may toss about for awhile, and then founder, unnoticed and unknown. Adverse winds in the shape of critics may assail it, some may give it faint praise, some may say that it is badly built, and some may call it a very presumptuous little craft indeed; but it may, it *may* weather all storms, and ride safely into harbour. Hope on, hope ever, *nil desperandum!* (*Calls.*) Boy, come here. (*Enter Boy.*) What is your name?

Boy. Jack, sir.

Arthur. Here then, Jack, here is sixpence for you, and here is the copy; mind you do not lose it.

Boy. Thank you, sir; all right, sir, any message sir?

[*That word recalls to ARTHUR's mind his recent vexation; he frowns.* I don't know, wait a minute.

Mrs. C.'s voice heard outside. Oh, dear, these stairs. (*ARTHUR opens the door.*) Why, aunt, I thought you were gone; have you forgotten anything?

Mrs. C. (*Sinking into a chair.*) Yes, dear, I had just got to the bottom, when all at once it popped into my head, that your uncle had given me a message for you; and here was I talking about all sorts of things, and never once thinking of it.

Arthur. Better late than never, aunty, what is it?

Mrs. C. Your uncle sends his love,—let me see—yes, that is it—your uncle sends his love, and hopes—(*She is interrupted by the sound of a bugle. HARRY rushes into the room.*)

Harry. Eureka, Eureka, I have found it ; that is, I have remembered it, "Most potent, grave, and reverend signior," you need not look black at me any longer ; I thought of it just as I was crossing a road ; and rushed back again regardless of the imminent danger I was exposed to, of being knocked down by a Hansom cab. (*Suddenly stops short, perceiving a lady in the room.*)

Arthur. My aunt, Harry.

Harry. (*Shaking her heartily by the hand.*) My dear Mrs. Cauliflower, I was not aware ; I beg your pardon for my noisy entrance ; I am delighted to see you in town ; but I am afraid you don't find Arthur looking very well.

Mrs. C. No, indeed, Mr. Harry, he looks anything but well ; he is as thin as a pea stick, and as pale as a parsnip.

Harry. (*Amused.*) Never mind, Mrs. Cauliflower, we will take him in hand, you and I ; we will soon make him as hearty as a cabbage, and as fat as a turkey. I have a strong suspicion that he is already *in chains* ! (*Aside to Arthur.*) Comparisons are odious, are they not, Arthur ? What fun, see if I don't tell Kate.

Arthur. Hold me up to her ridicule ! If you think that friendly, do so.

Harry. Now, Arthur, you should not take things so seriously, that is quite a fault of yours ; don't you know "It is good to be merry and wise" ?

Mrs. C. Ah, Mr. Harry, you are always merry.

Harry. Well, now for my message before I forget it again : Kate said I was to be sure and tell you that she hoped you would bring your flute on Thursday.

Arthur. Did she ? my flute ! On Thursday ?

Harry. Yes, didn't I say we were to have a musical evening ?

Arthur. No, you never mentioned it,

Harry. Just like me ; well, we are, and it is Kate's particular request that you bring your flute. I think she has got some grand piece of music with a flute accompaniment and

CHARADE.

wishes you to try it with her, (MRS. CAULIFLOWER rises.) My dear madam, one moment, and I shall have the honour of attending you down stairs. That little imp here still, Arthur?

Arthur. I am just sending him off.

Harry. Then the book is finished.

Arthur. It is.

Harry. Hurrah! We will drink to its success in a bumper. "Here's a health to all young authors," &c. Do you know we have got such a jolly chorus to sing on Saturdays, quite a stunner?

Arthur. Why only on Saturdays?

Harry. Oh, because all offices and places of business close at twelve o'clock on Saturdays, in order that everybody may have plenty of time to learn to be soldiers, so somebody has suggested that "The Chough and Crow" with a slight alteration, will make a good Volunteer Chorus. You know "The Chough and Crow," of course.

Arthur. Of course.

Harry. And you, Mrs. Cauliflower!

Mrs. C. Oh yes, Mr. Harry, I think every one knows that.

Harry. Very well, then I'll give you a specimen, and mind you all join in; you too, little imp.

Harry. (*Sings.*) "Uprouse ye then, my merry, merry men,
it is our closing day.

Uprouse ye then, my merry, merry men,
it is our drilling day.

Chorus. (*All.*) Uprouse ye then, my merry, merry men, it
is our closing day.

Uprouse ye then, my merry, merry men, it
is our drilling day, &c.—*ad lib.*

It is, it is, it is our closing day,

It is, it is, it is our closing day."

THE END.

